

A Proposal for Interpreting Luke 7,36-50

Are the actions of the sinful woman toward Jesus acts of gratitude for sins having already been forgiven her at some time prior to Luke 7,36-50, or are they acts which indicate her repentance and her hope of being forgiven? Is it Jesus who forgives her sins, or is God the one who forgives and Jesus the one who (only) announces this forgiveness? These two questions are the ones this essay seeks to answer.

I. The Woman's Actions

1. *Some Opinions*

Recently, R. Tannehill⁽¹⁾, wrote "An initial reading [of v. 47: "Because of this I say to you, her many sins have been forgiven because she loved much"] seems to indicate that she [the sinful woman] is being forgiven because of her great love, although love comes from forgiveness according to the parable in vv.41-42". In the light of the parable this 'initial reading', Tannehill then suggests, should be amended to the following understanding, "namely, that v. 47a speaks of love not as the basis for forgiveness but as the basis for knowing that the woman has been forgiven"⁽²⁾. But then, if the parable forces the reader out of his first

⁽¹⁾ R. TANNEHILL, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts* (Philadelphia 1986) 117-118.

⁽²⁾ Cf. TANNEHILL, *Luke-Acts*, 117; he notes here that it is the parable (vv.41-42) which forces the reader to rethink his original reading of v. 47, so as to conclude that the woman's gestures are great gestures of love following upon forgiveness of many sins. He also notes something very crucial here, that "communication [from author to reader] depends on the presumption that there are meaningful consistencies in texts, which we should seek to understand unless this proves impossible..." (117). In the light of this principle, one asks if the parable is truly or falsely interpreted by scholars, if the parable truly forces one to reverse one's initial reading of v. 47.

understanding of v. 47 to an opposite understanding of the verse, Jesus's statement in v. 48, "Your sins have been forgiven", "seems to suggest that assurance of the release of sins may follow love after all. The simple picture of love caused by forgiveness in the parable becomes more complex" (3). His final conclusion about this complexity is also complex:

The relation between experienced forgiveness and love may move in more than one direction. A willingness to love, and to show that love, may indeed lead to assurance of forgiveness... Through Jesus' closing words the woman may have learned something about the nature of her own actions and feelings. Furthermore, Jesus' words of forgiveness in v. 48 could be important as reassurance even if the woman had already begun to believe that she was forgiven (4).

The narrative approach, as carefully applied by Tannehill to Luke 7,36-50, ultimately suggests that we leave in place the two elements of the story, 'Luke emphasizing the love that follows forgiveness' and 'Luke emphasizing the love that precedes forgiveness', and that we find in the lived experience of the reader the resolution of how a story could contain two apparently opposing emphases (5).

For many people, the narrative approach is in a certain sense a response to the older source-critical approach to a text. In the case of Luke 7,36-50, source-critical scholars would incline to apply to the text's discrepancies of logic or literary characteristics the suggestion that these discrepancies are to be explained by multiple authorship. The rigors of this approach insist that the researcher find true discrepancies in the text, that the text be found truly illogical, not just contrary to the logic of the researcher (6).

As regards our text, the greatest discrepancy claimed by source-critics is that which Tannehill tried to resolve, as noted above. J. Fitzmyer presents the application of the source-critical

(3) TANNEHILL, *Luke-Acts*, 118. As Tannehill notes rightly here, "... v. 48 complicates the situation".

(4) TANNEHILL, *Luke-Acts*, 118.

(5) TANNEHILL, *Luke-Acts*, 118: "These remarks ... are merely meant to suggest that the story, with its complex view of forgiveness and love, does not thereby leave the realm of what many people may experience or imagine".

(6) To put it slightly differently, the turning to multiple authorship as a solution to textual discrepancies means that one mind, logical and literarily consistent, could not have written the text as it now (confusedly) stands.

approach to this problem⁽⁷⁾. First, Fitzmyer notes the often-stated patristic and modern understanding of v. 47b ("because she loved much"), that this clause is "implying that the forgiveness shown to her is the result of her love"⁽⁸⁾. Then he notes a second patristic and modern understanding of the same clause; it "could be understood not as the reason 'why the fact is so, but whereby it is known to be so' [Zerwick, *Biblical Greek*, §422]". Preferring this second interpretation, Fitzmyer, following the source-critical method, concludes about those verses 48-50, in so far as they suggest a forgiveness of sins after the woman weeps over Jesus, that they "are an appendage which makes the conflated pronouncement-story and the parable into a narrative"⁽⁹⁾. This means that the person who put together vv. 36-47b was not the person who added vv. (47c)48-50, for the same person would not contradict himself (though apparently the appendage person seems not to see or mind his contradiction of the pronouncement-and-parable person)⁽¹⁰⁾.

(7) J. FITZMYER, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX* (AB 28; Garden City 1981) 684-688.

(8) FITZMYER, *Gospel*, 686.

(9) FITZMYER, *Gospel*, 684. Fitzmyer also thinks that v. 47c belongs to a person other than the one who put vv. 36-47b together. It should be noted that the study of Luke 7,36-50, for Fitzmyer as for many other source-critics, involves three other types of criticism: synoptic criticism (actually, a particular form of source-criticism), form criticism and historical criticism. In regard to historical criticism, it is disputed what might have actually happened (if anything happened) among Jesus, the woman and Simon. As regards form criticism, the parable of vv. 41-42 is recognizable as such (though not called that by Jesus or Luke), and the outlines of a pronouncement story are visible (a series of circumstances which are organized so as to culminate in a pronouncement of Jesus); to these have been added elements (vv. 47c.48-50) which make of them all a third form, a "narrative" (FITZMYER, *Gospel*, 684). As regards synoptic criticism, the likenesses between this Lucan story and stories of anointing that one finds in Mark 14,3-9 and Matt 26,1-13 (as well as that of John 12,1-8) make many think that somehow the Lucan story of 7,36-50 is founded in or heavily influenced by one or other of these anointing stories. FITZMYER, *Gospel*, 684, prefers to think that Luke drew the content of his verses 36-47b from his special source, L, and then added the remainder. Again, how much the present story reflects an actual event, or details of an actual event, is difficult to say because all the factors mentioned above limit one's clear perception of history.

(10) When we write about pronouncement-story and parable (and the joining of the two), we should note that, besides the appending of vv. 48-50

Fitzmyer, as his commentary shows, represents a long line of other scholars who have analyzed this story along the lines mentioned above, though he has taken his reasonable and distinctive position among them. What is important to note here is, besides the turn towards multiple authorship to explain the discrepancy noted (a method not used by Tannehill), Fitzmyer, like Tannehill and so many others⁽¹¹⁾, finds the main problem of the Lucan text to be the relationship of the parable (vv. 41-42) and its application, which suggests a love which follows upon forgiveness, to the initial reading of the story, epitomized by the later verses 48-50, that forgiveness follows upon love. Fitzmyer expresses well the perceived influence of the parable (vv. 31-42) upon the rest of the story:

The parable of the two debtors, inserted into the pronouncement-story, not only carries its own message about the relation between forgiveness and love (that the sinner turns out to be the one who manifests to God greater gratitude than the upright, critical

by a later hand, Fitzmyer senses that earlier tradition had already made a pronouncement-story about the woman's coming to Jesus and his 'pronouncement' of her forgiveness, had later added and integrated this story with a fitting parable (684). It is this combination, he thinks, to which Luke adds vv. 48-50, referred to as 'Luke's appendage' (688).

(¹¹) For another considered discussion of vv. 36-50, cf. I. H. MARSHALL, *The Gospel of Luke* (Exeter 1978) 304-314; while Marshall insists that "Luke saw the story as a unity" (306), he admits that "it comes as something of a surprise that Jesus now [v. 48] turns to the woman and says to her, 'Your sins have been forgiven'" (314). The surprise, it seems, is overcome if one realizes that Jesus's statement that her sins have been forgiven "is thus a confirmation of what has already taken place, and brings to the woman the personal assurance of God's dealing with her through Jesus" (314). Marshall's treatment of v. 49, where Jesus is identified as one who forgives sins, does not help resolve the discrepancy, "forgiveness before or after love". A more recent view, which has Fitzmyer and Marshall and others as references, is that of C. F. EVANS, *Saint Luke* (London 1990). From study of the attendant problems of 7,36-50 he concludes that "this story, peculiar to Luke, illustrates his characteristic excellencies and deficiencies as a redactor of tradition... The picture is ... at times a blurred one, and inconcinities in the story raise questions of the form in which Luke received it, and of how far he was the master of his material" (360). Speaking more directly to our particular problem, Evans notes that "the comment in v. 47, which presumes the woman's forgiveness, would make an appropriate ending. The pronouncement, despite this, of forgiveness in v. 48 changes the character of story from one of dialogue and comment to one of action" (360). In this view the discrepancy with which we are dealing remains.

Pharisee), but also allegorizes the narrative: repentance for the sins of the woman's life has made her more open to God's mercy than the stingy willingness of the host who wanted to honor Jesus with a dinner⁽¹²⁾.

2. *The Function of Jesus's Parable (vv. 41-42)*

With the mention of the parable's influence on the Lucan story we come to the first of two propositions this essay wishes to offer; this first proposition is the basis of the answer to the first question which began this essay and about which, as seen above, there is still discussion: were the woman's acts of love of Jesus, described in 7,38, consequent upon or antecedent to forgiveness? The first proposition has to do with the parable, the application of which is crucial to the understanding of what Luke is saying in his Gospel. This first proposition is that the parable is only imperfectly applicable within the circumstances of 7,36-50, that there are a number of aspects to the parable which find no home in the surrounding verses⁽¹³⁾. Thus the parable, though helpful and, indeed, key to the story, cannot determine, in its imperfect relationship with its story, that the woman was already forgiven before v. 36 begins.

To show the imperfect application of the parable to the story in which it exists we point up three factors which reflect this imbalance between parable and greater story. (A fourth factor reflecting this imbalance will be shown later in this essay.) Once the first factor is justified, the way is opened for justification of the second and third factors. What is this first factor? It is that, though the parable is concerned with three characters (two debtors and a creditor), the application of the parable is concerned with only two: the greater debtor and the creditor — the lesser debtor drops. Why can this be so?

3. *The Parable and its Context*

1. The essential reason for this understanding of the parable and its application is the conviction that the Pharisee does not

⁽¹²⁾ FITZMYER, *Gospel*, 687.

⁽¹³⁾ Cf. G. BRAUMANN, "Die Schuldner und die Sünderin, Luk. VII. 36-50", *NTS* 10 (1964), who makes clear some aspects of what he calls the "unterschiedliche Charakter von Gleichnis und Geschichte" (488-489, 491-492).

qualify as the debtor who owed less and was forgiven less and thus will show less love. There is no suggestion that the Pharisee has been forgiven anything (nor that his debt is small). A suggestion, like Fitzmyer's statement about the "stingy willingness of the host who wanted to honor Jesus with a dinner", does not ring true to the circumstances presented by Luke. Why?

a. Luke's own way of presenting the initial circumstance forbids this: "Some one of the Pharisees asked him that he eat with him" (v. 36); this is not the equivalent of "a host who wanted to honor Jesus with a dinner". In fact, Luke has mentioned neither character's name here⁽¹⁴⁾. The bareness of this report is intentional; only at the end does one find that there were *hoi synanakeimeno*i involved in this eating⁽¹⁵⁾.

b. Though v. 47c ("he to whom little is forgiven loves little") may draw upon the parable's mention of a lesser debtor who will love less, it is not clear that this statement refers to the Pharisee. It can, if the circumstances warrant it, assure Simon that this sinful woman, whose sins are acknowledged to be *pollai*, will show a great love to her forgiver. That is, it is not v. 47c which determines other meanings, but other meanings which determine the specification of the proverb⁽¹⁶⁾. Verse 47c, then, can be understood as an assurance

(14) And partly because he wants to link it with the line of thought immediately preceding this story, for this story is a concrete example of the elements mentioned earlier, particularly the statement of Luke himself that the people and the tax collectors (and the sinners [v. 34]) were by their baptism by John professing God as right in His call for repentance, whereas the Pharisees and scribes were frustrating the plan of God for themselves by not being baptized by John (vv. 29-30). Vv. 36-50 are a dramatization of this Lucan complaint.

(15) Other Pharisaic invitations to Jesus for a meal are not honorific either: Luke 11,37; 14,1.

(16) TANNEHILL, *Luke-Acts*, 118, notes "... v. 47b, where little love is said to result from little forgiveness". Ultimately, as understood in its context, v. 47b is to be understood this way; but *in itself* the formulation or expression of v. 47b does not clearly mean that love *follows* forgiveness. Cf. J. NOLLAND, *Luke 1-9:20* (Word Biblical Commentary; Waco, TX 1989) 359: "Perhaps it is best in the first instance to recognize that since v. 47b completes the logic of the application which Jesus has made in v. 47a of the parable of vv. 41-43, it repeats in negative form the basis on which it was possible in v. 47a confidently to deduce that the woman had been forgiven a great deal ... there is no thought that Simon has any experience at all of

that the woman, not the owner of a little debt, will love greatly; it is the one to whom little is forgiven who will love only a little.

c. Further indication that the Pharisee does not qualify to be the lesser debtor forgiven, who will love his creditor (albeit less than the greater debtor forgiven), is the constant pounding Simon receives as Jesus reminds him that he did nothing for Jesus, in contrast to the woman. Occasionally it has been suggested that Luke is exaggerating, unjust, even unreal, when describing the Pharisee as so inhospitable; Marshall has denied this, claiming, like Schürmann⁽¹⁷⁾, that "it should be noted that Simon had not acted discourteously; he had been correct enough as a host, but had not performed any especial acts of hospitality that went beyond the mere demands of the situation"⁽¹⁸⁾.

Here one takes a lesson from the narratological perspective. Luke does not mitigate the Pharisee's inhospitality by virtue of the hope that his reader will surely know that Simon performed all that was minimally necessary to accommodate his guest. If Luke had wanted to depict the Pharisee as fulfilling the minimal standards of hospitality, he would have done so. That he leaves the picture as it is argues that Luke had no desire to present Simon in a good light, as one who had been forgiven — even a little⁽¹⁹⁾.

All of the above arguments suggest that the parable of vv. 41-42 is applied only at most to two people, the woman and Jesus.

God's eschatological forgiveness; and there is no suggestion that he is aware of any affectionate gratitude owed to God in relation to what is now happening through John and Jesus in his own day".

⁽¹⁷⁾ H. SCHÜRMANN, *Das Lukasevangelium* (Freiburg 1969) I, 435-436 and note 34.

⁽¹⁸⁾ MARSHALL, *Gospel*, 313-314.

⁽¹⁹⁾ A good comparison can be made between this story and that later episode, Luke 18,9-14, where Luke takes issue, through a concrete story centered on a Pharisee, with those "who have absolute confidence in themselves that they are just and who reduce to nothing the rest". Though the Pharisee undoubtedly speaks the truth in describing what good he has done, all this good is not recognized as such by the author and his way of telling the story, for the tax-collector was the one who went home justified and not the other (*par' ekeinon*). There is no "little justice" ascribed to the Pharisee, despite all his good deeds — and likewise there is no forgiveness ascribed to Simon in our story, nor is he described as one who will love a little, no matter what hospitality one might assume he gave to Jesus. The author has blocked this avenue of thought.

Furthermore, it is not of itself clear that v. 47c should be applied to Simon⁽²⁰⁾; from the context, we can argue that it should not be applied to him.

But what is the point of showing that Simon is not the real object of the parable, but that the woman and Jesus are? It shows that the parable is not as perfectly applicable to the circumstances of the greater story as has been thought in the past. And since we have found one way in which the parable is imperfectly matched with its surrounding circumstances, we look for other indications of this imperfect match. Specifically, what is the relationship of the parable to circumstances preceding the parable?

2. Implicit in the interpretations of many scholars is the need to preserve in the greater story of Luke that gratuitousness which characterizes the creditor's act of forgiveness of debts⁽²¹⁾. But, if the parable is not perfectly aligned with its surrounding story, the reader is allowed to make room for two complementary ideas: the absolute freedom of the creditor, which mirrors the absolute freedom of the forgiver of sins, *and* the repentance which Luke consistently calls for and which leads to forgiveness of sins, a repentance *not* mirrored by any detail in the parable. That is, the parable perfectly mirrors the

(20) MARSHALL, *Gospel*, 313, is correct when he notes: "The antithetical statement in the second part of the verse [= 47c] is couched in general terms (hence the present tenses), and is hence formal and theoretical. It does not necessarily imply that the Pharisee had already been forgiven by Jesus and shown an appropriately small amount of gratitude...". He goes on to suggest, however, that "the saying ultimately asks those who have little love for Jesus whether they have realised the magnitude of their sin and their need for forgiveness; if so, the saying could be ironic (cf. H. SEESEMAN, *TDNT* V, 172)" (313-314). Whatever the force of 'ultimately' may be, it seems more reasonable to see v. 47c (= 47b for Marshall) in relation to what can be expected from the great sinner: great love.

(21) Cf., e.g., the remark of FITZMYER, *Gospel*, 686, when he deals with the interpretation that says the woman was forgiven after her gestures to Jesus described in v. 38: "...her love then would be the condition of her pardon". It seems clear that the second way of interpretation (love follows upon forgiveness) allows one to escape, at least here, the unpleasantness of the sequence "love before forgiveness" as a Lucan teaching. Similarly, it is gratuitous on Marshall's part, *Gospel*, 313, to remark that "...it is doubtful whether the NT supports the view that love covers, i.e. atones for, sin". The remark is gratuitous, not because it is wrong, but because it has no place in assessing what Luke is saying in 7,36-50.

gratuity of forgiveness, while imperfectly (i.e., not at all) addressing the Lucan call for repentance which leads to forgiveness⁽²²⁾. From this point of view, then, we say that the parable, in its application, allows us to see in the woman's generous actions to Jesus signs of her repentance, though the parable's emphasis lies not in this, but in the gratuitousness of the creditor's act of forgiveness.

We have noted two imperfect alignments of the parable with its surroundings: Simon is not the equivalent of the lesser debtor forgiven and loving; the acts of the sinful woman do not at all lessen the gratuitousness of the creditor's forgiveness.

(22) To enter thoroughly into this subject of repentance leading to forgiveness in Luke is impossible. Sufficient is the recollection of certain texts — beginning with John the Baptist. John was to come in the spirit of Elijah “in order to present to the Lord a people prepared” (Luke 1,17). This is later summed up by Zachariah as “giving knowledge of salvation to His people in a forgiveness of sins” (Luke 1,77). And these two ideas prepare for the understanding of that description which characterizes John in his adulthood and in his mission, *kēryssōn baptisma metanoias eis aphesin hamartiōn* (Luke 3,3). Notable is the statement of Jesus in our own section of the Gospel, that the people and the tax-collectors are accepting John's baptism, whereas the Pharisees and scribes are not (7,29-30); this can only mean, especially in the light of the description of John's mission noted above, that the latter, not repentant, are thus not forgiven. But even more significant is the way in which Luke ends the Gospel. Looking backwards to the ‘necessities’ (*dei*) which characterized the death and the glorification/resurrection of the Son of Man/Messiah/himself (24,7.26.44-46), Jesus adds still one more ‘necessity’: that repentance for the forgiveness of sins be preached in his name to all people (24,47). And looking forwards, it is equally noteworthy that Luke chooses this phrasing to orient the reader to the contents of his second volume. Certainly, Acts 5,31 and 10,43 (as interpreted by 11,18) confirm what is Luke's consistent teaching. But of great importance is Paul's way of resuming his whole missionary effort (Acts 26,18 + 20) wherein Paul equivalently explains all he has done as simply aimed at offering the forgiveness of sins and asking for repentance and conversion to the one God. This consistent teaching does not preclude the generous intervention of God where no repentance has preceded; Paul (Acts 9) is the perfect example of this, and one might add that the impression from the three stories which explain (Luke 15) why Jesus associates with sinners — especially the impression received from the third one — suggests that God is forgiving before one has repented, for this is “a year of God's pleasure” (Luke 4,19), and the time of the “preaching of the *charis tou theou*” (Acts 20,24). For Luke these two factors are not contradictory — and should not offer confusion in the interpretation of Luke 7,36-50.

3. A third observation of the limited application of the parable to the greater Lucan story surrounding it has to do with the 'great love' which the greater sinner (the greater debtor) forgiven will show. While it is convenient to identify the loving acts of the sinful woman as acts of gratitude for sins already (at some time) forgiven, it is not altogether so convenient; for many people, upon entering this story, suspect nothing like this, and really cannot, in looking at Luke's narrative, satisfactorily point to any act of forgiveness the woman had already experienced before v. 36. Is she one of those (only implied) baptized by John in 7,29? Is she one of those sinners of whom Jesus is a friend (7,34), implying that she has, through this association, come to know that her sins are forgiven? Certainly, there is a connection between vv. 36-50 and the verses preceding them, but it is difficult to say that this connection includes precisely a forgiveness of this woman's sins (symbol though she be)⁽²³⁾. Thus, while she may be interpreted as expressing gratitude for forgiveness received, it is unlikely that this is the preferable explanation. And the parable, now known as imperfectly applicable to its surroundings, does not of itself support this reading.

4. *Love Which Follows Forgiveness in Luke 8,1-3*

Yet the parable does emphasize the love which will follow upon forgiveness. If the forgiveness of sins takes place only at the end of vv. 36-50, is the love which follows upon forgiveness, so characteristic of the parable, never described in Luke? Certainly it is not described by the end of vv. 36-50.

If one is willing to accept the sinful woman as a concrete case of the general picture drawn by Jesus in vv. 29-35, one has taken the first step to answering this question. It is unimportant to Luke what eventually happens to this woman (so characteristically unnamed in this story form, because it concerns itself only with need and resolution of need, and no other details). But what happens to her kind is important to Luke. So, what does happen to her type? To explain this, it is useful to turn to an observation drawn from

(23) Cf. the remark of TANNEHILL, *Luke-Acts*, 177: "The two groups to whom Jesus relates in the conflicts which we are discussing, the tax collectors and sinners, on the one hand, and the scribes and Pharisees, on the other, are here personalized in individual representatives..."

synoptic criticism, specifically from that Modified Two-Source Hypothesis which has Mark as the major source of Luke.

At least with the curing of a paralytic (2,1-12), during which Jesus claims to have power to forgive sins on earth, a negative response to Jesus begins to build up in Mark's Gospel, side by side with an already begun positive response to him. At one point, while the disciples are in Jesus's wake, the Pharisees and Herodians leave to plot how to kill Jesus (3,6). Finally, when Jesus formally chose twelve to be close assistants, the reader learns that two opinions have been formed about Jesus: his family thinks 'that he is out of his mind' (*hoti eksestē*) (3,21); scribes from Jerusalem claim he is possessed by Beelzebul and thus drives out demons by Beelzebul's power (3,22). This conflict of reactions to Jesus, positive and negative, clearly moves Mark's story forward to the eventual crucifixion, but it serves as the background for that parable which is key to the understanding of all other parables (4,13), the parable of the sower whose success depends on the ability of the ground to receive, hold and bring to fruition the seed sown. Thus far Mark.

What has Luke done with this Marcan structure? He too lays the earlier foundation of positive and negative response to Jesus, up to his report (6,11) that the scribes and Pharisees, mad with rage, take to discussing among themselves what they should do to Jesus. At this point Luke diverges from Mark, to return to the Marcan structure at the pronouncement of the parable of the sower who went out to sow the seed (Luke 8,4). Between Luke 6,11 (= Mark 3,6) and 8,4 (= Mark 4,1) what has Luke done differently from Mark?

First, after reporting the choice of the Twelve, Luke inserts a lengthy sermon of Jesus (the Sermon at the Mountain), a logical insertion, though Mark did not have it. Then, Luke removes the references to the assessments of Jesus, whether by his family or by the scribes of Jerusalem (to be found later in Luke). It seems reasonable to hypothesize that Luke did this because he preferred another than the Marcan way to lead immediately up to the sower/seed parable. In place of negative judgments about Jesus by family and Jerusalem scribes, Luke has at the center of his insertion the positive witness from Jesus's works, to answer the question of John the Baptist: "Are you the one who is to come?" (7,19). Earlier stories drawn from Mark would serve to help answer John's question, but Luke intentionally prefaces the Johannine question by

two stories (7,1-17) which are powerful, immediate and individualized data which will help answer John's question.

All the immediate and distant past which can offer proof that Jesus is indeed the one who is to come is in place. It is at this point that Luke can turn to a certain negative response to Jesus, the continuation of that negativity last seen in Luke 6,11, before the choice of the Twelve and the Sermon at the Mount. This negativity is not that of the family of Jesus or of the Jerusalem scribes, as in Mark. It is the negativity of those Pharisees and scribes who frustrate the plan of God for them by refusing the baptism of John the Baptist (7,30), of 'those people of this age' (7,31) who, like dissatisfied children in the squares, accept neither John nor Jesus (7,32-34). Indeed, for them Jesus is the friend of tax-collectors and sinners (7,34).

In answer to this negative response to John and to himself, Jesus claims that, as wisdom will be proved just from the type of children she produces (like mother, like children), so John and Jesus will be declared justified from the type of repentant disciples they produce (7,35).

To exemplify the type of person Jesus will produce, Luke now inserts a story of a sinful woman, who, repentant, will be forgiven her sins, whereas a Pharisee, the specification of those unrepentant people just referred to by Jesus, will be taught how just this woman is after contact with Jesus (7,36-50). Her class, of which she has been the symbol, is now introduced (8,1-3). These are women, many of whom Jesus has cured of evil spirits and infirmities, who will actually join Jesus to wander⁽²⁴⁾ with him and the Twelve, Jesus *kēryssōn kai euaggelidsomenos tēn basileian tou theou* (8,1); one of these women has had seven demons driven from her by Jesus (8,2). Moreover, together with these women, who are motivated, in part at least because of their healings, to follow Jesus and to listen to his words are other women, also keen to hear the word of Jesus, some of whom help Jesus and his twelve assistants materially (8,3).

(²⁴) TANNEHILL, *Luke-Acts*, 138, n.55, notes the comment of B. WITHERINGTON, *Women in the Ministry of Jesus* (Cambridge 1984) 117: "This was conduct which was unheard of and considered scandalous in Jewish circles". Corresponding to this scandalous conduct is the extraordinary conduct of the woman of 7,38; in this, as in so many other ways, she prepares for the enduring description of the women of 8,1-3, rather than simply presents a fleeting gesture of gratitude for sins forgiven or of repentance for sins or even of faith.

It is after the mention of this group of women (never noted by any other Gospel during the description of Jesus's preaching tour in Galilee) that Luke returns to the Marcan structure and to the presentation of the parable of the sower, the seed, and the good and bad ground.

It seems most reasonable to affirm, then, that Luke has prepared for this crucial parable finally by presenting those women disciples who, like others before them, represent the good ground for the seed. And, as a corollary of this, we suggest that the woman of 7,36-50 is transmuted into the group of 8,1-3 for which she stands. The justification for this suggestion is the evident editorial work Luke has done together with, and then beyond, the work of Mark so as to prepare for the sower parable; specifically the justification derives from the Lucan decision to place the notice of the women disciples, especially those healed by Jesus, immediately after the story of the woman forgiven her sins. It cannot be by chance that Luke places a story of women healed immediately after a story of a woman healed.

Two subsidiary points need to be added. First, though Luke insists that Jesus has the power to forgive sins, he never again refers unambiguously to Jesus's exercise of this power. Why he never does can be debated. But the importance of this reality is that the women Luke will describe as following Jesus to hear him will not be women motivated by Jesus's having forgiven their sins. Secondly, there is a strong suggestion as to why the woman remained unnamed throughout 7,36-50. The woman of 7,36-50 served the purpose of showing to the Pharisee (who thought of Jesus as barely a prophet) the profound power of Jesus and of showing to the Pharisee the logical result of repentance. To this end, whatever the historical reality was, she became a symbol, not only of forgiveness answering repentance, but also of the group of women many of whom followed Jesus, not because forgiven sins, but because healed of many other maladies.

Having drawn out the argument from synoptic criticism, we are in a position to draw the conclusion from it. We wanted to know if the woman of 7,36-50 had, as the parable and Jesus's question drawn from it suggested (7,41-42) to some, shown love for having been forgiven? The answer, as Luke has reconstructed Mark to show it, is that many women (8,1-3), in response to their being healed by Jesus, showed their love for him by following him to listen to his

word and, as some were able to do, to help him materially in his mission.

Thus, the parable of 7,41-42, shown to be inapplicable, first to Simon, and, secondly, to the woman's acts of repentance to Jesus, now is seen, thirdly, as unfulfilled by the woman, but unexpectedly fulfilled outside its own story — in the story of the women who followed Jesus to listen to his teaching and to help him materially in his mission. In these three ways, then, the parable does not determine elements of the story which surrounds it. But these elements are such that they do not allow the parable to mean that the woman was forgiven before 7,36. And if the parable is not admissible as evidence that the woman has been forgiven before entering Simon's house to see Jesus, but rather can be understood to uphold the interpretation that she was forgiven within 7,36-50, there is nothing to prevent the conclusion that Luke indeed in this story presents exactly what many have suggested: that Jesus's power to forgive sins is here, for a second time in Luke, being called on for Luke's purposes.

II. The Identity of the Forgiver of Sins

In one sense, to ask the question as to whether or not Jesus forgave the sins of the woman (before or after v. 36) is to initiate a totally new discussion, worthy of another essay. The justification for raising this question here, however, is that, as the parable had its influence on our first question, so it has its influence in this area as well — and so we wish to pursue this second question as a further conclusion from the parable.

1. *Some Opinions*

It is 'natural' (a more precise reading of the story and reflection on verbs and clauses might change this word to 'superficial') to consider v. 47, repeated substantially in v. 48, and v. 49 as indications that Jesus forgives (forgave) the woman's sins: "Your sins have been forgiven you [whether before or after v. 38]... Who is this who even forgives sins?"

As regards v. 47 as indicating that Jesus forgives (forgave), the essential objection comes from the main verb of v. 47a. First, *apheōntai* is considered to be a 'divine passive', which would make God the *forgiver* and, in consequence, Jesus the *announcer* of forgiveness.

Secondly, for those who hold that the *hoti* clause explains that the love manifested in v.38 is a sign of previous forgiveness⁽²⁵⁾, v.47 becomes just an affirmation of what had happened (= forgiveness) on some past occasion⁽²⁶⁾. It is true that Jesus still could have been the one to forgive the woman on that unreported occasion, but to put this occasion outside 7,36-50 and leave it unreported seems to be an assumption about Lucan authorship which one would not like to make. However, to return to the objection, and to put it another way, if v.48 is simply an announcement (to the woman) of a past event, so v.47a should, according to many, be considered an announcement (to Simon), and in no way be interpreted to say that Jesus is forgiver.

Thirdly, according to C. Talbert, the end of 7,36-50 parallels the beginning, which means that, as in the beginning Jesus was proposed (sceptically) as a prophet, he remains (and is proved to be)

⁽²⁵⁾ F. URICCHIO, "Volti di Penitenti in Luca: Riflessioni Esegetico-Teologiche", *Parola e Spirito* (Studi in onore di Settimio Cipriani, a cura di Cesare Marcheselli; Brescia 1982) I, 228, calls the debate regarding the *hoti* clause "la celebre e interminabile discussione sul senso causale o consecutivo della congiunzione *hoti*". He has come to the conclusion that, "sotto l'angolazione filologico-sintattica ... la situazione è ... decisamente a favore del primo significato [i.e. causal]".

⁽²⁶⁾ FITZMYER, *Gospel*, 688, affirms that 7,36-47 shows Jesus to be "an agent of the declaration of God's forgiveness for sinful humanity. Luke's appendage [48-50] even presses further, making the other guests at table pose the question about his own relation to the forgiveness of sins". At v.47 the verb *apheōntai* is followed by the comment (682), "I.e. by God (the theological passive is being used; see NOTE on 5:20). Moreover, the pf. tense expresses the state of forgiveness which Jesus recognizes and declares". But then Fitzmyer notes at v.49, "The pres. tense of the verb *aphiēsin* ascribes to Jesus a power that was not immediately apparent in the earlier part of the story". Well, what do we ultimately conclude is the message of Luke: Jesus, only announcer of forgiveness or forgiver? Body of story and appendage do not help matters here. On this point (Jesus, announcer of forgiveness or forgiver) TANNEHILL, *Luke-Acts*, is not absolutely clear. On the one hand he will describe Jesus as the one "who brings release of sins", 177 and 117; but then Jesus is also described as "the one through whom God proclaims the release of sins", 117. Perhaps the ruling thought of Tannehill is expressed best in his treatment of Luke 5,17-26, where he affirms unambiguously, first, that 5,17-26 is "the first reference to Jesus forgiving sins", and secondly, that "Luke presents the scene [5,17-26] as a demonstration of Jesus' authority to release (or forgive) sins before representatives of Israel".

a prophet; like a prophet, he has an inspired perception (characteristic of a prophet) of the woman's true state, i.e., forgiven⁽²⁷⁾. That is all Jesus is — prophet, not forgiver. More specifically, Talbert shows the construction of 7,36-50 to be a chiasm, AB:B'A'⁽²⁸⁾; this is the basis of his claim that Jesus is spoken of in this story as prophet. *A* represents the woman's grateful gestures towards Jesus (v. 36, only introductory, is not part of the chiasm). *B* represents the Pharisee's negative judgment of Jesus, prophet. *B'* then represents Jesus's response to Simon's appraisal. And *A'* then represents Jesus' response to the woman⁽²⁹⁾.

Contrary to a strong view such as Talbert's, that Jesus is only prophet and not forgiver, is the equally forceful expression of, among others, J. Ernst, "Gott handelt geschichtlich in Jesus; Jesus aber vertritt Gott voll und ganz. Das aber ist der Punkt, der sie aufschrecken lässt. Sie haben sehr genau begriffen, dass hier nicht nur ein religiöser Lehrer sagt, was Gott getan hat, sondern sein Wort bewirkt die Verzeihung Gottes"⁽³⁰⁾.

(27) C. H. TALBERT, *Reading Luke* (New York 1986) 86. Talbert's explanation of the sequence he finds in the Lucan story is: 1. the woman knew of her forgiveness before 7,36; 2. she manifests gratitude for this forgiveness in 7,38; 3. Jesus responds to v. 38 by assuring the woman, as only a prophet can, that she is forgiven (87).

(28) TALBERT, *Luke*, 86.

(29) Unfortunately, in an otherwise thorough and thoroughly explained chiasm, Talbert does not include v. 49; why he does not is never explained, but it has to be.

(30) J. ERNST, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (RNT; Regensburg 1977) 259. But like many others, Ernst is of the opinion that "als sekundäre Erweiterung kann mit grösser Wahrscheinlichkeit V. 48-50 angesehen werden" (255). Yet to allow this key point of the story to be supported mainly by a later 'Erweiterung' seems to weaken Luke's mastery of his text. Is it necessary to concede that? For his part, URICCHIO, «Volti di Penitenti», is equally insistent: "Il problema cristologico, affacciato in termini inadeguati è risolto negativamente da Simone (vv. 39-40), e riaperto da Gesù stesso mediante l'atto di manifestare i sentimenti del fariseo e della peccatrice, ed è posto esplicitamente e con dimensioni nuove a tutti con l'assoluzione, che, sebbene attribuisca a Dio il perdono, lascia intravedere una certa partecipazione del Maestro a quella prerogativa divina ed è lasciato aperto con l'interrogazione, che è un invito a riflettere, approfondire e concludere" (235). One might have to nuance Uricchio's latter words (as regards audience: banqueters as opposed to Theophilus) in the light of what Luke expects the reader to have remembered from Chapter 5, but the general thrust of his remark is clear. Elsewhere he notes

And we may use this citation of Ernst as indication that the earlier two negative views noted above, by which it is argued that Jesus is not the forgiver of sins, have not prevented Ernst (or others) from concluding that Jesus is a forgiver of sins.

In response to the question posed, this present essay takes a position which is rather nuanced, but, in the long run, is most in accord with the thinking of Luke. Specifically, Luke wants Jesus to be understood as centrally involved in the forgiveness of the woman's sins, and he presents that thought through more than one medium; he uses not only the clarity of v. 49 for this purpose, but he also so presents his entire story that he maintains the mystery of the interrelated roles of God and Jesus involved in this forgiveness. And, as indicated earlier, the parable of vv. 41-42 will have to be handled properly in the explanation to follow.

2. *Three Reflections on Verse 49*

We make three observations about verse 49. First, as often noted, this verse, which does most to support the position that Jesus is the forgiver of sins, appears practically at the end of the story; it qualifies as an addendum for many exegetes, which means that the story could have ended very nicely with v. 47 — which would leave the question of Jesus as forgiver of sins completely unilluminated. One cannot deny the 'tardiness' of this verse, but then one cannot ever forget that Luke counts on his reader to remember the question which has already been answered in direct confrontation: "Who is this who forgives sins? ... But in order to show you that the Son of Man on earth has power to forgive sins..." (5,21.24). The 'tardiness' of the verse, then, is no problem, once one takes the demands of reading into account.

succinctly that "Gesù è oggetto del movimento di amore ascensionale e diretto a Dio ... Gesù è oggetto del primo comandamento e non del secondo..." (233). Cf. O. DA SPINETOLI, *Luca* (Assisi 1982) 285: "La reazione dei farisei [= the banqueters] ... serve a mettere in rilievo la linea aperta da Cristo e la potestà che gli compete"; G. SCHNEIDER, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (OTKNT; Gütersloh 1977) I, 178: "V 49 lässt den V 48 im Sinne einer jetzt erfolgenden Absolution durch Jesus verstehen, nicht aber als konstatierende Deklaration über die zuvor erfolgte Vergebung ... Der Redaktor, der VV 48f. anfügte, hat damit erreicht, dass Jesus ... [als] der Vergebende bzw. Vergebung Zusprechende gekennzeichnet wird".

Similarly, the verse contains the unnerving assessment of a new group of people, people who cannot be said to have been present at the words of Jesus just cited above from Chapter 5. Thus, while for them Jesus, forgiver of sins, is a startling and profound idea which takes precedence over the revelation of the new status of a sinner, especially against the old status of Simon, their new insight is not new to Theophilus; this is a further reason to explain why a foundational idea, such as Jesus the forgiver of sins, emerges only at the end of the story.

Yet, though appearing only briefly, the idea of v.49, together with the omniscient statement of v. 50, puts the entire episode on the level of Christology — where it belongs at this stage of Luke's narrative. Christology is the lasting, most important question; the woman and Simon ultimately serve this cause.

Secondly, the affirmation of v.49 merits a distinction. On the one hand, it clearly affirms, by its very suggesting the idea, that Jesus is the forgiver of the woman's sins. On the other hand, the present tense of its verb does not automatically mean that present action is taking place. Rather, the structure of the question, "*tis houtos estin hos*" + description, suggests strongly that we are dealing with a characteristic clause. In this case, the verb is indicative, because the author wants us to think that the questioners actually believe Jesus did the forgiving, that they want to know "Who is *he*?". In consequence, this means that the question is not saying of itself that Jesus forgave sins just now, rather than at some time before 7,36; that must be shown by some other means. The present tense (of this indicative verb), however, is affirming that Jesus has the characteristic of forgiving sins.

Thirdly, v. 49 must be considered in the light of the parable, which has such an influence over this entire episode. We have indicated above in Part I how the parable in three ways is not applicable to elements of the fuller episode. We have also indicated that it is necessarily applicable to the woman. Now we wish to affirm another application of the parable to its greater context.

The parable's *danistēs* must have its correlative in reality, otherwise the parable, as a symbol of forgiveness, is seriously deficient. One might assume that this *danistēs* of the parable, forgiver in reality, is left unattended by Luke, but this is not the case. When Jesus moves to apply the parable, he is very clear in

asking, "Who will love *him* the more?"⁽³¹⁾. The third character of the parable is very much on Jesus's agenda.

This fact, in turn, makes one reassess the woman's striking acts of v. 38, which begins the intense action of the story. It is focussed on *him*. May this be construed as the response of a sinner to a prophet? Its intensity and exaggeration suggest that we are not dealing with Jesus the prophet⁽³²⁾. Given the opening the parable offers us, it seems best to identify Jesus as the *danistēs*. Verse 49 would support this. This puts pressure on the interpretation of the passive perfect elements of *apheōntai*; these elements of this verb are no longer dominant, dictating the meaning of other things, but must be integrated and re-worked with all the data now present to arrive at a more thorough interpretation of Jesus.

And Jesus's subsequent hammering contrast of the woman's actions against Simon's inactions all centers on him. It is not that 'she has done this, which you have not done'; it is always 'she has done this *to me*, which you have not done *for me*'. As following upon the parable, one cannot but wonder, even if the parable itself does not speak of gestures of the greater sinner towards the *danistēs*, that the *danistēs* is intentionally arranged to be understood as Jesus. Again, v. 49 is the verse which secures this understanding.

⁽³¹⁾ Textual criticism makes its own contribution here. When Jesus asks Simon, "Which of the forgiven debtors will love the generous creditor more?", three sets of variants can be given to show how different manuscripts read the ending of that question (cf., e.g., K. ALAND et al., *The Greek New Testament*, 3rd edition corrected [Stuttgart 1983] 235):

pleion agapēsei auton (B)
pleion auton agapēsei (A)
auton pleion agapēsei (D).

The problem here seems to revolve around what idea will be given the position of importance in Jesus's question to Simon, "him" or "love" (or "more love"). The preferred text puts *auton* in this favored position, thus suggesting the supreme importance of the character represented by the creditor.

⁽³²⁾ URICCHIO, «Volti di Penitenti», 225, insists that this woman's "amore muto, ma esuberante e audace, inerente all'iniziativa della donna di avvicinarsi a Gesù, bagnargli i piedi di lacrime, asciugarli con i capelli e spalmarli di profumo è amore di pentimento", rather than of gratitude for past sins forgiven. She is looking forward to forgiveness. In support of his view that v. 38 describes acts of *repentance*, Uricchio (225, n. 58) cites H. SCHÜRMANN, *Das Lukasevangelium* (Freiburg i.B. 1969) 433.

All this means that, despite the conclusions of source-critics that v. 49 is an appendage or addendum, v. 49 comes dynamically out of the parable, which in turn comes organically, though imperfectly, out of the opening verses of our story. Indeed, given the literary dynamisms of the story as it stands, one is inclined not to make the story over according to source criticism, but to make source criticism over, to search again for true signs which justify the application of source criticism to this, or any, passage.

3. *The Entire Lucan Story as Hermeneutical Key*

V. 49, if understood within the dynamic of its story, should allow one to conclude that Jesus forgave the sins of the woman known to be a sinner in her town, and this Christological statement links this story to the continual theme of this section of Luke's Gospel: the meaning of Jesus⁽³³⁾. Yet that the story is meant simply to affirm Jesus to be the forgiver of sins is difficult to believe. The affirmation comes so late and is put only in question form — and the reader already knows Jesus to be forgiver of sins from 5,17-26 (and Luke never simply repeats himself). Indeed, there is something else involved in this story. To get at it we should look to a certain part of the Acts of the Apostles and the Lucan way of thinking represented there, and as a result of this look we will have to readjust almost all that we have affirmed above.

The section of Acts which is so significant for Luke 7,36-50 is essentially the story of Cornelius. This story is in the main dealt with in Acts 10,1-11,18 and is again brought to the reader's attention in Acts 15,7-11. It is the combination of certain elements of these two *loci* which will help us.

The first thing to note is that, while Cornelius is described (10,2.4.22.[25].30.31.35) with all the adjectives, verbs and nouns which could be said to characterize a repentant person (even an *anēr dikaios* [10,22]), he can be described as one whom God has given *tēn*

(³³) Cf. J.-N. ALETTI, *L'art de raconter Jésus-Christ* (Paris 1989), who entitles his treatment of the Lucan section 4,14-9,50 "L'identité de Jésus" (87-109) and concludes this section of his work with the observation: "La section prolonge et vérifie l'épisode de Nazareth: la reconnaissance de Jésus comme Prophète, Envoyé et Messie devait se faire et s'est faite, par des groupes différents, sa renommée est allée au-delà même des frontières et personne n'est resté indifférent à son endroit" (108).

metanoian eis dsōēn (11,18). When the Jerusalem community notes this gift of God, is it referring to the type of person to which we have just made reference when pointing to descriptions of Cornelius in certain verses of Chapter 10?

The answer must be no, despite Luke's highly laudatory picture of the Gentile. Despite the fact that Cornelius has come so far as even to find the true God, Peter, in his speech to the Centurion and his family, insists *touto pantes hoi prophētai martyrousin aphesin hamartiōn labein dia tou onomatōs autou panta ton pisteuonta eis auton* (10,43). The crucial significance of what turns out to be Peter's final words to Cornelius is that, even though one returns to God and obedience to His law (as John the Baptist would have all Israel do), forgiveness of sins, which is a major hoped-for result of repentance, comes through faith in Jesus, through calling on his name. In this way Christians had learned to re-define repentance, so that it included as its most essential element faith in Jesus.

Thus, no matter what Cornelius had become with respect to the Jewish concept of repentance (and conversion from false gods to the true God), he would find the major object of repentance, forgiveness of sins, in faith in Jesus. This new understanding of repentance is what explains why, though Cornelius had done his best as a human being towards the true God and towards other human beings, he still had to hear *panta ta prostetagmena soi hypo tou kyriou* (10,33); *rhēmata ... en hois sōthēsē su kai pas ho oikos sou* (11,14).

Though interrupting our reflection, it is worthwhile to note, from the above two texts, that there must be a close association between, on the one hand, the "things ordered by the Lord" and the "words in which you will be saved", and, on the other hand, the actual content of Peter's address, which focussed on this one practical motive for faith: the forgiveness of sins. Thus, salvation, faith in Jesus, repentance and forgiveness are all tightly bound together in the new Christian understanding of God's plan.

Now one is in a better position to understand the phraseology used by the Jerusalem community (with which phrasing Luke wants to end his Cornelius story), *tēn metanoian eis dsōēn* (11,18). The faith in Jesus is the essential characteristic of a *metanoia* which leads to life. This life may be called *sōtēria*, in which case both forgiveness of sins, the hoped-for result of repentance (cf. Luke 1,77), and life are elements of salvation, the result of faith in Jesus (who earlier [3,15] had been described as *archēgos tēs dsōēs*).

When one now considers the later reference to the Cornelius story in Acts 15, one has a clear understanding of what Peter says. He describes God (Acts 15,9) as *tē pistei katharidsas tas kardias autōn*. Certain Christians thought that of equal importance with faith were circumcision and obedience to the Mosaic Law (15,5), but Peter assures everyone that faith alone is the means necessary for salvation, for cleanness of heart, for repentance⁽³⁴⁾.

In the light of the Cornelius story (and one can undergird its affirmations with many other texts of Acts which speak of Jesus as one who is to bring repentance and forgiveness to Israel and others [e.g. 3,26; 13,38.39]), we make the following applications to the story of Luke 7,36-50.

a. At 7,36, the woman can be taken to be still a sinner; her description, *hētis ēn en tē polei hamartōlos* (7,37), is not just a wrong impression of the townspeople or of the Pharisee (7,39). However, her actions are not simply a sign of repentance, but involve a profound belief in the one she offers these actions to. She *believes* in Jesus the physician, who, as the Gospel insists, seeks out sinners to bring them to repentance (5,32).

b. The Pharisee by word, as the woman by actions, focusses, not on repentance and forgiveness, but on the identity of Jesus; who is he? The Pharisee is guilty of a lack of faith in Jesus, as he sceptically evaluates Jesus as hardly even a prophet.

⁽³⁴⁾ We can add that, when Paul most fully sums up his life (Acts 26,2-23), he first notes that Jesus chose him to do the following: "turn people from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to the true God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a share among the holy ones by virtue of faith in me (Jesus)" (v. 18); then, Paul himself rephrases this mandate when he notes that all he has done in his whole missionary life, now calling for a justification, is "announce *metanoein kai epistrephein* *epi ton theon, aksia tēs metanoias erga prassontas*" (v. 20). Finally, this announcing is further rephrased as Christological effort: Paul will announce nothing other than what the prophets and Moses had spoken of: that the Messiah once dead and risen would announce light to Israel and to the nations (vv. 22-23). All this serves to express Luke's conviction, underlying his book of Acts, that repentance is of supreme importance and that traditional religious expression, including the traditional theology of repentance and forgiveness, had to be so reworked as to make faith in Jesus the key element of that repentance which hopes for forgiveness, for salvation, for life.

c. The parable Jesus offers centers on the gratuity of the forgiving creditor, for the question to be drawn from the parable is concerned with love for him. It promises that the one forgiven will love this forgiver, the love in proportion to the forgiveness. This love is manifested in the report of 8,1-3, in the kind of love Jesus would wish: listening to his word.

d. Jesus contrasts the woman's faith acts with the lack of faith of Simon. For all the value of the parable when applied to the human situation in which it is placed (inability to free oneself from debt, gratuity of the forgiver's forgiveness, great dedication following forgiveness of many sins), the parable does not talk about faith in the *danistēs*; this preserves the absolute freedom of the forgiver, which is, undiluted, precisely the element which will motivate great love in return.

e. *Hou charin* (7,47) refers most specifically to the woman's acts as acts of faith. It does not mean that forgiveness is owed to this faith, but that this faith is what is necessary for forgiveness, for it is that which God uses to purify hearts (Acts 15,9).

f. Jesus knows her many sins have been forgiven her, not because he has forgiven her in the past (prior to 7,36) nor because he has a prophetic insight about her, but because he is a Lucan character who knows that faith in himself purifies. Perhaps the woman had faith in Jesus before she entered this scene, which means she may well have been forgiven before 7,36; but what we know is that she expressed faith in Jesus in 7,38, so that becomes the focal point of Jesus's knowledge that she has the faith necessary for forgiveness, and thus has been forgiven.

g. In accord with Acts 15,9, which notes that "God cleanses by virtue of faith in Jesus", we can understand *apheōntai* as a divine passive, expressing that God has forgiven the woman through her faith in Jesus.

h. Her actions are actions of faith, as is clear from the fact that they are addressed to Jesus, intending to say something profound about him. The actions, however, are of such a kind that they express love for him, the love which moves other women to follow Jesus and materially assist him, if possible. In this sense they are called acts of love⁽³⁵⁾. These acts of love are a sign (*hoti*) to

(35) The verb *agapaō* is never used in Acts; in the Gospel of Luke one finds it essentially confined to three situations: 7,36-50; the Sermon at the

Jesus of the presence of that faith which God uses for forgiveness. Such is her faith, her love, that full forgiveness is possible; only little is forgiven where there is little faith and love.

i. Jesus necessarily tells the woman of her forgiveness by God (v. 48) for she did not know that she had been forgiven, despite her faith, until someone informed her.

j. V. 49 brings into play now what had already been affirmed in Luke 5,17-26, that Jesus has power on earth to forgive sins. Here, people not present in 5,17-26 grope towards the true meaning of what has taken place, but they do it in the indicative mood (*aphiēsin*, for it is a real act) and in the present tense (for it is recognized as something characteristic of Jesus). Most of all, their comment puts pressure on the previous two uses of *apheōntai*. The divine passive does not exclude Jesus from the act of forgiveness; rather, v. 49 impinges on *apheōntai* and forces one to ask just how to relate faith in Jesus with the God who cleanses by means of that faith in Jesus. What does this cleansing faith mean for the right identification of Jesus?

Jesus is not just a prophet. He is intimately tied up with forgiveness; just how is not made clear, but one does not solve the problem by making him one who only learns of forgiveness and then hands on that knowledge to anyone who has faith in/love for him. That interpretation does not do justice to what Luke means when he writes that "God cleanses through faith in Jesus". What does do justice to this statement in Acts is the banqueters' introductory formula (7,49b): *who is this* who *de facto* has the characteristic of forgiving sins?

Mount (in the theme of love of one's enemies), and the action of "love of God and love of neighbor, the greatest commandment(s)". The argument can be made that *agapaō* is not a Lucan word. This in turn suggests that Luke used the word because of sources, and thus in 7,36-50 because the word was in the source. If Luke, out of respect for his source, uses the word in one sense (tense) in the parable, "love following upon forgiveness", and in another sense (tense) in the greater story, "love preceding (knowledge of) forgiveness", we can point to an analogy, i.e., another similar (though not exact) parallel usage. In handling the Good Samaritan parable Luke uses *ho plēsion* (10,36) in a way (where the subject is the one loving) exactly opposite to the way he uses it in the story which prepares for the parable (10,28-29, where the object is the one loved).

k. The convergence of all elements comes now in the statement of Jesus to the woman, in which the more inclusive term, salvation, replaces the more limited salvific term, forgiveness. It shows, first, that the story is concerned ultimately and directly with the faith that saves.

Indirectly, one cannot miss the restatement of the earlier problem: who is this who can talk of faith in himself as saving? If forgiveness on earth belongs to the Son of Man, who for Luke is clearly Jesus, who is Jesus when it is God who forgives one who has faith in Jesus and who is Jesus when he speaks of the faith in himself which saves? We are being asked to think of Jesus as more than one who has the power on earth to forgive. He is associated with God who has power in heaven to forgive by virtue of faith in Jesus.

One should hesitate to speak of v. 50 as an addendum, since it brings the story to a fulfillment not possible if the story is cut off short, i.e., at the end of v. 47a. One needs to know that it is faith in Jesus which has saved this woman, that it is faith in Jesus by virtue of which God has forgiven her, that, by virtue of this faith in Jesus, one can begin the questioning of the identity of Jesus who has entered so significantly into the act of forgiveness that he can be said to forgive.

1. In its greater context, the story of Luke 7,36-50 becomes a story which, together with 8,1-3, well introduces the question of the sower and the various grounds onto which the seed is scattered. In our understanding, as the parable of the seed speaks of both repentance and faith, so 7,36-50 speaks of repentance which involves faith as its central element, which faith leads to forgiveness and salvation, and to the following of Jesus, often by those who have been cured by him and return his love by a determined discipleship.

Conclusion

Luke 7,36-50 is a story of forgiveness and salvation. But since forgiveness and salvation come from faith in Jesus, inevitably the story also contains Christological meaning. In particular it insists on invading the traditional divine power to forgive, to save, by asking who is this Jesus who is so intimately involved in the act of forgiveness, in salvation. Acts 10,1-11,18; 15,7-11 is the one hermeneutical key to understanding Luke 7,36-50, for it puts most

clearly the essential role faith in Jesus plays in God's plan for forgiveness and salvation. Unlike the traditional Jewish system, which urged repentance and return to God, the Christian system, while knowing the place of its God, insists that faith be placed in Jesus. Luke 7,36-50, like Acts 10,1-11,18; 15,7-11, is stubbornly driving Jesus into the divine sphere without being able to specify this relationship. One cannot settle for the clarity that Jesus is simply a prophet; the woman, the proverb, the banqueters all want to know Jesus's relationship to forgiveness and salvation, while professing that he forgives and saves.

The exegetical justification for the final interpretation of the story offered in the material reaching from Acts to Luke is found, first, in the true understanding of the proverb (vv.41-42) to its surroundings, and, then, in the suitability of the Cornelius story, Luke's story, to clarify so many elements which no other approach to Luke 7,36-50 has been able to clarify. It is this completeness of interplay between parts of Luke's own story which explains Luke 7,36-50 best; i.e., it is Luke himself who, while recounting stories he has received, molds all into the theology which makes fullest sense to him — and to those who later called his works 'inspired'. In other words, it is Luke who has interpreted Luke, and that seems satisfactory.

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SOMMAIRE

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L'article affronte deux questions: 1) les gestes de la femme envers Jésus en Luc 7,38 sont-ils des gestes de remerciement pour les péchés pardonnés ou un acte de repentance? 2) est-ce Jésus ou Dieu qui pardonne les péchés de la femme? Pour répondre à ces questions il importe de voir comment la parabole de Jésus (vv.41-42) s'applique à son contexte, et aussi examiner l'interprétation fournie dans le récit lucanien concernant Corneille en Ac 10; 11; 15.

Son of Man Seated at the Right Hand of God: Luke 22,69 in Lucan Christology

As has been routinely observed in recent commentaries, Luke's report concerning the questioning of Jesus by the Sanhedrin differs from Mark's and Matthew's. In contrast to the twofold question by the High Priest: "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" which we find in Mark 14,61, Luke, in his account, has two separate questions. The second of these, "Are you the Son of God, then?", comes after Jesus' statement that "from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God" and is the *inference* the whole council drew from Jesus' answer⁽¹⁾. But one seldom finds in exegetical literature an explanation of what Luke understands by this inference⁽²⁾.

In his commentary on Luke's gospel, J. A. Fitzmyer notes that this "puzzling two-staged question posed by the high priest ... is a literary echo of the identification of Jesus by Gabriel in the infancy narrative: "He will sit on David's throne; he will be the Son of God" (Luke 1,32.35)⁽³⁾. This, however, should not obscure the differences between the two texts. Luke 1 mentions the sitting on the throne of David, while Luke 22 speaks about the sitting at God's right hand⁽⁴⁾. In Luke 1 the statement "He will sit on David's

(1) Rightly noted by S. KIM, *The Son of Man as the Son of God* (Grand Rapids 1985) 4. No mention of any inference is made by J. NEYREY, *The Passion According to Luke. A Redaction Study of Luke's Soteriology* (New York-Mahwah 1985) 72-76.

(2) See on this G. SCHNEIDER, *Verleugnung, Verspottung und Verhör Jesu nach Lukas 22,54-71* (SANT 22; Munich 1969) 123-124. Schneider does not seem to take *oun* as an inference in a strict sense. With J. SCHMID (*Das Evangelium nach Lukas* [Regensburg 1960] 241) he leaves it open whether *oun* refers to the declaration of Jesus in v.69 or to the previous answer of Jesus to the High Priest in vv.67-68.

(3) J. A. FITZMYER, *The Gospel according to Luke* (2 vols.; AB 28; Garden City, NY 1981; 1985) 207, 1462.

(4) That sitting at God's right hand is not equivalent to sitting on the throne of David is clear from Luke's references in Acts 2,33.

throne" is placed next to the statement "He will be the Son of God", while Jesus' divine sonship is inferred from his conception through the Holy Spirit. In Luke 22, however, the inference is made from "He will sit at the right hand of the power of God" to "You are the Son of God" ⁽⁵⁾.

The phrase "from now on" (*apo tou nyn*) in Luke 22,69 points to the present time as the beginning of the change from the lowly condition of the Son of Man to the exalted position next to God. From now on the Son of Man will be on the right-hand side of God. We note that a similar pointing occurs also in Matt 26,64, the parallel text to Luke 22,69. Matthew, however, employs the phrase *ap'arti* to indicate the present beginning of the change.

That Jesus' being seated at God's right hand is an important theological statement in Luke-Acts is apparent from Acts 2,33.34; 5,31; 7,55.56, and beyond that in the New Testament epistles ⁽⁶⁾. But what does "seated at God's right hand" mean in Luke's gospel? Why does Luke imply thereby that Jesus is the Son of God? What is the implication of the Son of Man's exaltation for Luke's christology?

I. Luke 22,69 in the Trial Scene, 22,66-71

In order to answer these questions, we need to examine the synoptic accounts of Jesus' hearing before the Jewish council. Although many commentators regard Luke's account of the interrogation scene, Luke 22,66-71, as derived from Luke's special source, some dependence here on Mark is generally conceded, especially for v. 69. According to Fitzmyer, "If v. 69 comes from the same source, then it has been assimilated to Mark 14,62, either by Luke or by the source before him" ⁽⁷⁾. He admits some

⁽⁵⁾ The differences between Luke 1,32 and 22,69 seem to reflect the twofold statement in the credal formula in Rom 1,3, where Paul says that the Son of God "was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead".

⁽⁶⁾ See Rom 8,34; Eph 1,20; Col 3,1; Heb 1,3.13; 8,1; 10,2; 1 Pet 3,22. As these texts indicate, the sitting at God's right hand is a stereotyped expression, but it admits of a certain range of variations. In the epistles it is not associated with the Son of Man, as it is in the gospels and in Acts 7,56.

⁽⁷⁾ FITZMYER, *Luke*, 1458.

resemblance with Mark also for v. 71, while G. Schneider, who has done an intensive study of the passion narrative, regards vv. 69-71 as derived from Mark⁽⁸⁾.

1. *Mark's Account of the Trial, 14,61-64*

In the second gospel we find in this place a twofold question asked of Jesus by the High Priest: "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" to which Jesus answers, "I am" (Mark 14,61-62a). Jesus then volunteers the following statement: "And you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven" (v. 62b). The High Priest, hearing this prediction, tears his garment and exclaims, "Why do we still need witnesses? You have heard his blasphemy" (vv. 63-64). Jesus is then condemned to death by the whole assembly.

The impression created here is that this additional explanation of Jesus in v. 62b is not necessary, for he has already admitted that he is "the Christ, the Son of God". Why, then, did Jesus speak about his being seated at the right hand of God and his coming on the clouds of heaven? We note that, as usual in Mark's gospel, Jesus does not take up the titles "Christ" or "the Son of God", but rather talks about the "Son of Man". According to R. Pesch, this self-designation here is scarcely the creation of Mark or of the tradition upon which Mark drew⁽⁹⁾. Our concern here, however, is not whether or not Jesus had spoken these words, but the meaning of this saying in Mark and Luke's use of Mark as the source.

⁽⁸⁾ G. SCHNEIDER, *Evangelium nach Lukas* (2 vols.; Ökumenischer Taschenbuchkommentar zum Neuen Testament, 3/1-2; Gütersloh 1977) 468-470; "Gab es eine vorsynoptische Szene 'Jesus vor dem Synedrium'?", *NT* 12 (1970) 22-39; *Verleugnung*, 118-134. For further literature on this, see FITZMYER, *Luke*, 1458; also I. H. MARSHALL, *Commentary on Luke* (Grand Rapids 1978) 850-851.

⁽⁹⁾ R. PESCH, *Das Markusevangelium. 2. Teil* (Freiburg-Basel-Vienna 1980) 439. H. E. TÖDT (*Der Menschensohn in der synoptischen Überlieferung* [Gütersloh 1959] 33), who acknowledges the authenticity of the Son of Man sayings dealing with the coming of the Son of Man, denies that Jesus uttered this statement in Mark 14,62. G. LOHFINK (*The Last Days of Jesus* [Notre Dame, Indiana 1984] 31), accepting the authenticity of this saying of Jesus, rephrases it as: "He is the Christ, insofar as he is the Son of Man. He will soon be seated at the right hand of God and, as the apocalyptic judge himself, judge the Council that now sits in judgment on him".

In Mark's presentation, this saying of Jesus about the Son of Man confirms and fills out the meaning of the titles "Christ" and "the Son of God". But Jesus here shifts from the language of his questioners and talks about himself as the Son of Man. According to R. Pesch, Jesus thereby corrects the Messianic imagery implied in the high priest's question and utters a prophetic warning: He will come as the exalted Son of Man to hold judgment over his present judges⁽¹⁰⁾. In the Marcan text, Jesus is clearly identified with the Son of Man; there is not even a hint of any puzzlement over this term⁽¹¹⁾.

The new element here is the image of the Son of Man seated at the right hand of God. The allusion is to the Ps 110,1, where it implies God's subjugation of the enemies to the king: "The Lord said to my lord, 'Sit at my right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool'". In Mark 12,36 Jesus had pointed to the scribes' application of this verse to the Messiah and made the point that the one seated at God's right hand must be someone greater than the Son of David. The implication was that Christ is someone greater than the Son of David. The imagery "seated at the right hand of God" in Mark 14 thus implies, on the basis of 12,36, that the designation "Son of Man" transcends the Messianic designation "Son of David". The image of the Son of Man's coming on the

(¹⁰) PESCH, *Markusevangelium II*, 438. According to Pesch, this is not an early-Christian christological creation out of Ps 110,1. The Son of Man is Jesus' own self-designation, while his expectation of his suffering and exaltation attracted to itself the expression "seated at the right hand".

(¹¹) The title "Son of Man" for Jesus is self-evident to Mark, who places it consistently on the lips of Jesus. In the NT the term occurs almost exclusively in the sayings of Jesus about (a) his own earthly career; (b) his passion and resurrection; (c) his future coming. PH. VIELHAUER denies that Jesus employed this term ("Gottesreich und Menschensohn in der Verkündigung Jesu" [*Aufsätze zum Neuen Testament*; TBü 31; München 1965] 55-91; "Jesus und der Menschensohn", *ibid.*, 92-140); E. SCHWEIZER regards some sayings in (a) and (b) as authentic ("Der Menschensohn", *ZNW* 50 [1959] 185-209; "The Son of Man", *JBL* 79 [1960] 119-129; "The Son of Man again", *NTS* 9 [1962/63] 256-261); TÖDT regards some sayings of Jesus in group (c) as authentic (*Menschensohn*, 29). For a critical discussion of this, see M. HOOKER, "Is the Son of Man problem really insoluble?", *Text and Interpretation. Studies in the New Testament presented to Matthew Black* (ed. E. BEST-R. MCL. WILSON) (Cambridge 1979) 155-168. For further literature, see KIM, *Son of Man*, 7-12.

clouds of heaven then underscores his heavenly status⁽¹²⁾. But this imagery, as well, occurred earlier, in 8,38 and 13,24-27, where it depicted the Son of Man's coming in the glory of God and in the company of the angels of heaven⁽¹³⁾.

Jesus' declaration in 14,62 thus implies his heavenly exaltation and his coming in the power of God. As Pesch notes, this answer presupposes the exaltation of the Son of Man⁽¹⁴⁾. It also presupposed Jesus' identity with the Son of Man and the council's grasp of it. But the council does not question Jesus concerning his claim to be the Son of Man. Mark, however, had been identifying Jesus with the Son of Man all along.

In Mark's gospel, this seemingly uncalled-for statement of Jesus affirms his eschatological status: He will have the highest place of honor and power, being seated on God's right hand; he will come in the power of God. The evangelist implies that the council understood Jesus to be the Son of Man. But the council was only interested in what Jesus asserted of himself: that he will be seated at the right hand of God; that he will come with the power of God. Jesus' words "and you will see" suggest that this will become manifest to the council and imply the fulfilment in the near future. These words may also contain an overtone of vindication and warning. But Mark's gospel does not describe the exaltation of

(12) KIM, *Son of Man*, 15, suggests that the motif of coming on the clouds indicated the divinity, but this is scarcely right. A. FEUILLET's survey ("Le fils de l'homme de Daniel et la tradition biblique", *RB* 60 [1953] 170-202, 321-346), on which Kim draws, does not sufficiently differentiate between coming "in the cloud" and coming "with the clouds" or "on the clouds". See on this J. THEISOHN, *Der Auserwählte Richter* (SUNT 12; Göttingen 1975) 245.

(13) According to Mark 8,38, the Son of Man will come "in the glory of his Father with the holy angels". In 13,26, the Son of Man will come "in clouds with great power and glory", and he will send out his angels to gather his elect. The expression "in the glory of his Father" implies that the Son of Man is also the Son of God. According to *1 Enoch* 1,3-9 it is God who comes with his angels for judgment and salvation.

(14) PESCH, *Markusevangelium II*, 439. NEYREY, *Passion*, 74, mentions here the vindication of Jesus by God: "The title 'Son of Man' refers here to the one rejected on earth, but vindicated in heaven". Neyrey holds this for Mark 14,62 and Luke 22,69. For a more nuanced view, see SCHNEIDER, "Son of Man", 282.

Jesus; it does, however, make repeated assertions of Jesus' — Son of Man's — resurrection and parousia⁽¹⁵⁾.

Jesus is then accused by the High Priest of blasphemy and condemned to death (vv. 63-64). But since his answer contains the admission that he is the Christ, the Son of the Blessed, as well as the claim that he will be seated at God's right hand and come on the clouds of heaven, the precise nature of the blasphemy is not clear. The impression, however, is created that it was the last part, the reference to the exaltation, that earned him the charge of blasphemy.

2. *Matthew's Account of the Trial, 26,63-66*

The parallel account in Matthew closely follows Mark's, even though there are some differences between the two accounts. Matthew retains the twofold question of the high priest, to which Jesus gives a non-committal answer: "You have said so" (Matt 26,63-64)⁽¹⁶⁾. He similarly retains Jesus' unsolicited explanation of the Son of Man seated on God's right hand: "But I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven" (v. 64). The introductory phrase "but I tell you"⁽¹⁷⁾, which is Matthew's redactional addition, serves as a link between Jesus' answer and his additional statement, while "hereafter" (*ap' arti*⁽¹⁸⁾) points to the present moment as the *terminus a quo* of the change affecting Jesus and his audience. By adding the qualifier *ap'arti*, Matthew agrees in the idea, but not in the formulation with Luke, who has here "from now on" (*apo tou nyn*, Luke 22,69)⁽¹⁹⁾.

But this is scarcely more than a chance agreement, for Matthew has, for his own reasons, been emphasizing the eschatological

(15) For Mark, the coming on the clouds refers to Jesus' parousia and suggests that only then will the Son of Man be vindicated.

(16) See on this D. CATCHPOLE, "The Answer of Jesus to Caiaphas (Matt XXVI.64)", *NTS* 17 (1970/71) 213-226.

(17) *Plēn legō hymin* occurs in the NT only in Matthew (3 times).

(18) Among the synoptics, only Matthew uses *arti* (7 times). The combination *ap' arti* occurs 3 times, in 23,39 (diff. Luke 13,35), 26,29 (diff. Mark 14,25; Luke 22,16.18), and 26,64 (diff. Mark 14,62; Luke 22,69), always in solemn "prophetic" statements of Jesus referring to the (eschatological) change of order affecting him and his audience.

(19) This agreement cannot be used as a proof that Matthew and Luke here drew on the "Q" source.

change of order beginning with these events in Jerusalem⁽²⁰⁾. He, as well as Mark, has the reference to the Son of Man's coming "on the clouds of heaven". The blasphemy charge, placed twice on the lips of the High Priest (vv. 65-66), seems to be directed to Jesus' last statement, to his (Son of Man's) exaltation and his coming on the clouds of heaven, although this is not entirely certain.

In almost all the points, Matthew's account here closely resembles Mark's. All his changes here with respect to the Marcan text can be explained as his redactional additions to, or modifications of, Mark.

3. *Luke's Account of the Trial, 22,67-71*

We have seen that, in Luke's account, the High Priest asked two separate questions. The first question is a demand⁽²¹⁾, rather than the simple inquiry as in Mark. The High Priest asks: "If you are the Christ, tell us" (Luke 22,67). But Jesus answers: "If I tell you, you will not believe; and if I ask you, you will not answer" (vv. 67-68). His response here is different from the one reported by Matthew or Mark. He alludes to Jer 45,15 LXX, as many commentators acknowledge⁽²²⁾, but fills the structure of Jeremiah 45 with his own words. It may be, as some scholars maintain, that this is Jesus' prophetic challenge of his interrogators, but the modifications of Jer 45,15 LXX suggest that Luke has here also in mind Jesus' earlier encounters with some members of the council. Still, Jesus' answer to the council is an implicit admission that he is the Christ. In his statement about the Son of Man⁽²³⁾, which follows, Jesus uses his own language, stating, "But from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God". The phrase "from now on" (*apo tou nyn*⁽²⁴⁾) is a Lucan

⁽²⁰⁾ See n. 18.

⁽²¹⁾ We find a demand also in Matthew's rendition: "I adjure you by the living God, tell us..." (Matt 26,63).

⁽²²⁾ MARSHALL, *Luke*, 849; FITZMYER, *Luke*, 1467; SCHNEIDER, *Verleugnung*, 115-118.

⁽²³⁾ On the designation "Son of Man" in Luke, see G. SCHNEIDER, "Der Menschensohn in der lukanischen Christologie", *Jesus und der Menschensohn. Für A. Vögtle* (ed. R. PESCH - R. SCHNACKENBURG) (Freiburg-Basel-Vienna 1975) 267-282.

⁽²⁴⁾ *Nyn* occurs 3 times in Mark, 4 times in Matthew and 14 times in Luke (25 times in Acts). *Apo tou nyn* is found in the NT only in Luke's

formulation, although in idea it resembles Matthews' *ap' arti* in Matt 26,64. But a dependence on Matthew or "Q" here is unlikely: Luke, no less than Matthew, has been emphasizing the change about to take place concerning Jesus' mode of presence (cf. 22,16.18.35-36). In fact, Luke's gospel ends on the scene of the ascension, in which Jesus' presence, even the presence through the resurrection appearances, has come to an end and Jesus has ascended into heaven.

But in this additional information concerning the Son of Man, Jesus does not mention that his audience "will see", nor that the Son of Man shall come on the clouds of heaven. In this respect, Luke differs from Mark and Matthew, toning down the overtone of vindication without denying the parousia of the Son of Man (see Acts 1,11). Jesus states only: "But from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God" (v. 69). Luke has added here "of God" for clarification. According to him, then, Jesus claims for himself a new status with respect to God, effective "from now on". The precise moment of this exaltation is not spelled out, but Luke's gospel had mentioned Jesus' predictions of his resurrection (9,22; 18,33) and concludes with the resurrection accounts and the ascension of the risen Jesus (24,1-53). In the transfiguration account, 9,31, the two heavenly witnesses, Moses and Elijah, spoke of Jesus' exodus, which he will accomplish in Jerusalem. In Acts, Jesus' exaltation to God's right hand is the essential item of the apostolic proclamation. All the changes in Luke 22,69 can be understood as Luke's redaction of Mark (25).

The response in vv. 70-71 is also different from that in Mark and Matthew. In Luke, it is the whole assembly which then asks Jesus, "Are you the Son of God, then?" (26). The context makes it clear that the assembly has identified the Son of Man seated at the

gospel — in 1,48; 5,10; 12,52 (red); 22,18.69 — and in Acts (18,6). FITZMYER *Luke*, 110, using J.C. HAWKINS' criteria (*Horae Synopticae* [Oxford 1909] 15), numbers this phrase among Luke's characteristic vocabulary.

(25) For further literature on this, see MARSHALL, *Luke*, 850; FITZMYER, *Luke*, 1458, 1463.

(26) SCHNEIDER regards this sentence as a light redaction of Mark (*Verleugnung*, 123-124). *oun* occurs 57 times in Matthew, 5 times in Mark, 31 times in Luke, 62 times in Acts. Luke inserts this particle in the Marcan sections at least 4 times, and in the "Q" sections at least 3 times. The particle occurs in "L" sections 7 times.

right hand of the power of God with the Son of God⁽²⁷⁾. Any other explanation of this inference is scarcely plausible. According to Luke, then, the assembly had thus drawn from Jesus' declaration in v.69 the conclusion that he claims to be the Son of God⁽²⁸⁾. Jesus then gives his answer, "You say that I am"⁽²⁹⁾.

At the end, it is again the whole assembly which says, "What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips" (22,71). According to this, the council has interpreted Jesus' answer as an admission that he is indeed the Son of God. Luke does not mention here the charge of blasphemy, but the action of the assembly in bringing Jesus before Pilate and demanding death for him (23,1) speaks for their condemnation of Jesus, although their charges against him before Pilate are only political.

Through his redactional changes Luke thus makes it clearer than Mark, or even Matthew, that Jesus was condemned for claiming to be the Son of God. He also indicates that this claim is implied in Jesus' declaration to be the Son of Man seated at the right hand of God. This brings us to Luke's account in Acts 7,56,

⁽²⁷⁾ On *oun* see SCHNEIDER, *Verleugnung*, 123. Schneider leaves it open whether *oun* in Luke 22,70 refers back to the question: "Are you the Christ?" or makes an inference from the immediately preceding declaration of Jesus in v.69. But Luke's procedure in the gospel clearly indicates that he often makes an inference from the immediately preceding statement — Luke 7,42; 8,18; 10,2,40; 11,13.35.36; 12,26; 14,33; 16,11.27; 19,12; 20,15. 17.29.33; 21,7.14. Inferential *oun* within an account, and not merely at the beginning of a new section, is a regular feature of Luke's style, occurring in traditional sections as well as in Lucan redaction. It occurs at least 3 times in Luke's redaction of the Marcan material (20,17.33; 21,14) and 3 times in his redaction of the Q material (11,35.36; 12,26).

The context of 22,70 demands that *oun* refer to Jesus' declaration in v.69. Why would Luke make the council totally disregard Jesus' declaration in v.69? If the inference in v.70 simply links back to the question in v.67, rephrasing it in terms of the Son of God, why did Luke then separate the two questions? Why did he not leave them together as in Mark?

⁽²⁸⁾ The claim is implied in Luke 20,41-44, the Lucan parallel to Mark 12,35-37. But Luke here may be presenting this clarification from the faith perspective of the early church.

⁽²⁹⁾ CATCHPOLE, "Answer", 213-226, regards this answer of Jesus as historical. According to him, the council suspected that Jesus talked about himself as the Son of God, implying an extraordinary relationship with God; MARSHALL, *Luke*, 851, regards this as a grudging admission on the part of Jesus.

where Stephen is condemned and killed for saying that he saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

II. Stephen's Confession in Acts 7,56

In the account of Stephen's appearance before the council we find nearly the same situation as in the gospel text dealing with Jesus' appearance before the council. Commentators have observed that Luke is modelling this account on that of Jesus before the council. Stephen, as well, is brought before the High Priest and the council. After his speech, in which he indicts Israel for killing the Righteous One, Stephen, "full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and he said, 'Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God'"⁽³⁰⁾ (Acts 7,55-56). Hearing this, the council "cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together upon him" (v. 57).

For our purpose, Stephen's statement is interesting in that, in it, the titles "Christ" or "the Son of God" are not mentioned. Stephen is condemned for having asserted that the Son of Man is standing at God's right hand. It is clear that Luke identifies the Son of Man with "Jesus standing"⁽³¹⁾ at the right hand of God" (v. 55). But the council's reaction here explains its earlier reaction to Jesus in Luke 22,69-71: it indicates, in Luke's view, that it was this claim of Jesus and about Jesus that it could not tolerate. They took Stephen outside the city and stoned him⁽³²⁾.

Stephen's vision thus confirms the claim of Jesus in Luke 22,69: Jesus, whom the council condemned to death for his claim to be the Son of God, is now in heaven, standing at God's right hand, just as he had said earlier to the council. But it also confirms the missionary sermons of Peter in which Jesus is presented as exalted to the right hand of God. And it ultimately explains what happened at the

⁽³⁰⁾ SCHNEIDER, "Menschensohn", 280, regards Acts 7,56 as Lucan composition.

⁽³¹⁾ According to SCHNEIDER, "Menschensohn", 280-281, "standing" is an appropriate term for an activity of the exalted and enthroned Son of Man in the period of the church. The Son of Man rose in order to welcome the martyr.

⁽³²⁾ This is confirmed by the council's similar reaction to the statement of Peter and other disciples in Acts 5,30-33.

ascension of Jesus, mentioned at the end of Luke's gospel and at the beginning of Acts.

III. The Exalted Jesus in the Sermons in Acts

The book of Acts loops back over the last section of the gospel and describes the additional activity of the risen Jesus and his ascension. It then depicts the mighty coming of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles and reports the preaching of Peter, the Spirit-filled spokesman of the apostles.

In his first speech, Acts 2,14-42, Peter begins by explaining the sudden speaking in tongues by the apostles. He ascribes it to Jesus' sending of the Holy Spirit from the Father (v.33), as he had promised beforehand. Jesus is with the Father and is sending to his disciples the Holy Spirit, just as he had promised. In the course of his speech, Peter uses two parallel arguments from the scriptures, one for the resurrection of Jesus, the other for his exaltation. In vv.25-28 he quotes Ps 16,8-11, God's promise to David that he will not experience corruption, and argues that this promise has been realized not in David, who lies in his grave, but in the Christ, the descendant of David. He makes a similar argument from the scriptures for Jesus' exaltation, saying, "For David did not ascend into heaven, but he himself says, 'The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, till I make your enemies a stool for your feet.' Let the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified" (vv.34-36). The exalted Jesus has "received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit" and he is now sending the Holy Spirit (v.33).

This argument from the scriptures for Jesus' exaltation contains a quotation from Ps 110,1 and discloses that it was God who has exalted Jesus and subjugated to him all his enemies. It clearly associates the ascension of Jesus with his being seated at God's right hand. The mention of Jesus' sending the Holy Spirit from the Father is a further reference to his ascension, to the promise Jesus had made to his disciples in Acts 1,4 and in Luke 24,49 before his departure. The implication is that it was through the ascension that Jesus became endowed with power⁽³³⁾.

⁽³³⁾ We find the same interpretation of Ps 110,1 also in 1 Cor 15,25, where it is reinforced with a reference to Ps 8,6.

But Peter uses the designations "Lord" and "Christ", rather than "the Son of God", to bring out this power and honor of the risen and exalted Jesus. The point he makes here is that it was God who has vindicated the crucified Jesus, making him both Lord and Christ. The title "Lord", although used already in Luke's gospel for Jesus, marks in Acts the disciples' open acknowledgment of Jesus after his resurrection⁽³⁴⁾. It expresses their understanding of Jesus in faith. But, as G. Schneider has observed, in Acts this title is also used for God, and it is not always possible to distinguish between the two usages⁽³⁵⁾. The title "Son of God" does not occur here; however, the risen Jesus is said to be with *the Father*⁽³⁶⁾, which implies that Jesus is God's Son. But in Peter's speech this is taken for granted⁽³⁷⁾.

In his second speech, 3,12-26, Peter again explains the Easter events; here, as well, he mentions the exaltation of Christ and his future coming. He tells his audience at the temple that the God of their fathers has glorified his servant (*pais*) Jesus. He calls on the people to repent in order to receive refreshment from God and that God "may send the Christ ... Jesus, whom heaven must receive until the time for establishing all that God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old" (vv. 20-21; cf. 1 Cor 15,24). According to this text, the risen Jesus in heaven is the Christ whom God will send at the time of the fulfilment of all things. The exaltation of Jesus is his glorification.

Peter mentions once again the exaltation of Jesus in his speech in Acts 5,29-32 before the Jewish council. He tells his interrogators: "The God of our ancestors raised Jesus whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him" (vv. 31-32). Here, again, the exaltation of Jesus is implicitly linked with Jesus'

⁽³⁴⁾ The title *kyrios* refers to Jesus in the missionary speeches in Acts 2,21.34.36 and 10,36. All told, this title for Jesus occurs in Acts 60 times.

⁽³⁵⁾ In Luke's gospel, the title *kyrios* refers to God 37 times, and in Acts 40 times; see on this G. SCHNEIDER, *Die Apostelgeschichte 1. Teil* (HTKNT 5; Freiburg-Basel-Vienna 1980) 333; also Lukas, *Theologie der Heilsgeschichte* (BBB 59; Königstein/Ts.-Bonn 1985) 158-172.

⁽³⁶⁾ This is an echo of Luke 24,49.

⁽³⁷⁾ SCHNEIDER, *Apostelgeschichte*, 333.

ascension: the apostles are witnesses to Jesus' ascension, and the attestation by the Holy Spirit is the result of Jesus' ascension to the Father. Here we find two further designations for the role of the exalted Jesus: Leader and Savior. Both functions are clearly attributed to the exalted Jesus. He is through the gift of the Spirit conducting the disciples' proclamation, and he is pouring the Spirit on those who receive their word in faith (Acts 2,1-4.17-18.33.38; 4,31; 7,55; 8,15; 8,29.39; 9,17; 10,19-20; 10,44-47; 11,15-17; 13,4). Through the exalted Jesus, forgiveness of sins is proclaimed and obtained (13,38).

Thus, according to Peter, the exaltation of Jesus has been foretold by the scriptures. The God who foretold this to Israel has also raised his servant (*pais* – Acts 3,13.26; 4,27.30)⁽³⁸⁾ to his right hand and entrusted him with the leadership and salvation of all. But God is also the Father of Jesus, and it is from the Father that Jesus receives the Holy Spirit. All this Luke deliberately formulates in Jewish categories⁽³⁹⁾.

It is Paul, however, who preached that Jesus is the Son of God. He had received before Damascus the vision of the exalted Jesus, the *kyrios*⁽⁴⁰⁾, and then promptly proclaimed in the synagogue in Damascus: "He is the Son of God" (Acts 9,20). This agrees with what Paul himself states in Gal 16: "He who set me apart before I was born ... was pleased to reveal his Son to me". At Damascus, Paul, according to Luke and the apostle himself, came to know the exalted Christ as God's Son. We find the same proclamation in Paul's sermon in Acts 13,33, where he quotes Ps 2,7. The good news which he proclaims on that occasion is that "what God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus; as also it is written in the second psalm, 'You are my Son, today I have begotten you'".

⁽³⁸⁾ Luke uses *pais autou* in the sense of "servant of God" for the people of Israel (Luke 1,54), for David (1,69; Acts 4,25), and for Jesus (Acts 3,13.26; 4,27.30). In the background of the glorification of the servant of God is Isa 52,13 LXX, where we find the expressions *ho pais mou, hypsōthēsetai kai doxasthēsetai sphodra*. According to E. HAENCHEN, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Philadelphia 1971) 205, Luke understood the designation "servant of God" as a solemn expression for the "Son of God".

⁽³⁹⁾ See on this G. LOHFINK, *Die Himmelfahrt Jesu: Untersuchungen zu den Himmelfahrts- und Erhöhungstexten bei Lukas* (SANT 26; Munich 1971) 258.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Throughout the account of Paul's Damascus experience, Jesus is referred to as the *Kyrios* (Acts 9,5.10.11.13.15.17).

In Acts, the seating at God's right hand is not restricted to the designation "Son of Man". In fact, apart from Acts 7,56, the title "Son of Man" is not used for Jesus. The seating is rather related to the resurrection, the ascension, the lordship, the sonship and the exaltation of Jesus. Jesus, risen and exalted to God's right hand, is the Christ, the Lord, the Savior, the Leader, the Son of Man, the Son of God. While Peter's sermons imply and take it for granted that Jesus is the Son of God, Paul makes the designation "Son of God" the explicit center of his proclamation.

IV. The Ascension of Jesus

We have noted that the statements in Acts about the exaltation of Jesus refer to his ascension, as the reference to the sending of the Holy Spirit from the Father indicates. Acts has at the beginning the ascension scene, but Acts merely restates the ascension scene that is in the conclusion of the gospel.

Luke's gospel concludes with the description of the ascension of Jesus (Luke 24,50-53). In this respect, Luke is unique among the evangelists. In chap.24 he describes the risen Jesus' appearances, first to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, then to Peter, and then to the entire assembly of the disciples in Jerusalem. His last instruction to the disciples concerns their role after his departure. He charges them to be "witnesses to these things", and then says, "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high" (v. 49). Jesus then took the disciples to Bethany, the place of his ascension, where "lifting up his hands he blessed them. While he blessed them, he parted from them, and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy" (vv. 50-52).

In this account, the resurrection appearances of Jesus are clearly separated from the ascension of Jesus⁽⁴¹⁾. It is the ascension that terminates Jesus' earthly existence⁽⁴²⁾. At the end of the resurrection accounts and just before his ascension, the risen Jesus promises to the disciples the Spirit of his Father, saying, "I am

⁽⁴¹⁾ This is indicated also by the change of place. Jesus takes the disciples from Jerusalem to Bethany (Luke 24,50).

⁽⁴²⁾ See on this LOHFINK, *Himmelfahrt*, 252.

sending upon you the promise of my Father" (v. 49). Jesus here refers to God as his *Father*; he is ascending to his Father, from whom he will receive the Holy Spirit. And now is the *exodos* of Jesus, announced by the two heavenly figures, Moses and Elijah, complete (9,31)⁽⁴³⁾. His *analēmpsis*, mentioned in 9,51 and governing the rest of Luke's gospel, thus completes not only the Easter chapter, but the entire gospel (cf. Acts 1,21-22).

G. Lohfink⁽⁴⁴⁾ and R. Dillon⁽⁴⁵⁾ bring out that the ascension scene contains the delayed profession of faith on the part of the disciples — their only profession of faith in Luke's gospel. Verse 52, whose authenticity⁽⁴⁶⁾ can scarcely be questioned any longer with the discovery of P⁷⁵, states that the disciples, having witnessed the ascension of Jesus, "worshipped him". Luke, in his composition of chap. 24, has placed this expression of faith at Jesus' *ascension* into heaven⁽⁴⁷⁾. As G. Lohfink has shown, Luke, in his redaction of Mark, has employed this word in the sense it has in 4,7-8, where Jesus quotes Deut 6,13: "You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve" (48).

(43) According to LOHFINK, *Himmelfahrt*, 256, the *exodos*, announced at Jesus' transfiguration, is fulfilled with the ascension of Jesus.

(44) *Himmelfahrt*. See also J. A. FITZMYER, "The Ascension of Christ and Pentecost", *TS* 45 (1984) 409-440.

(45) *From Eye-Witnesses to the Ministers of the Word* (AB 82; Rome 1978) 146-147, 166-167, 180, 224.

(46) See on this K. ALAND, *Studien zur Überlieferung des NT und seines Textes* (ANTF 2; Berlin 1967) 155-172; DILLON, *Eye-Witnesses*, 59. P⁷⁵ is dated c. AD 200, which means that the text was probably in existence a generation earlier, c. AD 170.

(47) Although LOHFINK, *Himmelfahrt*, 253, points out the full meaning of this expression of faith, he does not note the precise occasion and reason for it. For him, the *proskynēsis* is the final answer of the disciples to the Easter events. For DILLON, *Eye-Witnesses*, 146-147, 166-167, 180, 224, this faith is the disciples' final acceptance of Jesus' resurrection.

(48) Whereas Mark uses the work *proskynein* indiscriminately, Luke consistently corrects the Marcan usage in this regard and retains this word only for the worship of God in Luke 4,8 and for the disciples' worship of Jesus in 24,52. Luke confirms this usage in Acts 10,25-26, where Cornelius falls before Peter and worships him. On that occasion, Peter raises Cornelius, saying, "Stand up; I too am a man" (cf. also Acts 14,15). Cf. J. PLEVNIK, "The Eyewitnesses of the Risen Jesus in Luke 24", *CBQ* 49 (1987) 90-103, esp. 102; LOHFINK, *Himmelfahrt*, 253-254; id., "Gab es im Gottesdienst der neutestamentlichen Gemeinden eine Anbetung Christi?", *BZ* 18 (1974) 161-179; SCHNEIDER, *Lukas, Theologe der Heilsgeschichte*, 225.

According to Luke, Jesus taken into heaven is with his Father and is to be worshipped. In this respect, Jesus' ascension differs from that of Enoch or Moses or Elijah: these were taken into heaven, but did not thereby receive worship. The words "from now on" in Luke 22,69 imply that, at the ascension, the Son of Man takes the place at the right hand of God; the ascension makes this manifest. But 22,69 also states that this honor implies that Jesus is the Son of God.

In Luke's gospel, the disciples at long last recognize Jesus as the one whom the voice of God at the baptism and at the transfiguration had called "my Son". In Mark's gospel, this last recognition is placed on the lips of the pagan centurion under the cross (Mark 15,39), but in Luke it is implied in the ascension scene, the grand finale of the gospel and the link to the post-Easter proclamation. In the light of 22,69, Jesus, "seated at the right hand of the power of God", is the "Son of God". The ascension of Jesus is not merely a translation into heaven, but the exaltation of the Son of Man to the Father's right hand. Luke suggests that this is an endowment with honor appropriate to the Son of God.

This gives to Luke's gospel a new dimension and thematic unity. Mark's gospel, as its title suggests, is "the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mark 1,1). The theme of Jesus being the Son of God begins and ends Mark's account. It is sustained at the transfiguration account, in the disclosures of the demons, and through Jesus' own admission before the council and his references to his Father. Luke has retained all this from the second gospel with the exception of the centurion's declaration; but he has also added the following items: the statement of the angel Gabriel in the Infancy Narratives that Jesus would be conceived by the Holy Spirit and would therefore be Holy, the Son of God (1,32.35); the passage from the Q source stating that the Son is known only to the Father and is himself the revealer of the Father (10,21-22); the explicit question of the council and Jesus' response (22,70); Jesus' prayer on the cross (23,46); and Jesus' promise to send from the Father the "promise from on high" (24,49).

For Luke, of course, Jesus has been the Son of God ever since his conception; he does not become the Son of God through his ascension. But the sitting on God's right hand, which became manifest at Jesus' ascension, is seen as God's glorification of his Son in the sight of the disciples. We find here a christology that is close to that in Rom 1,3-4.

In the ascension account in Acts, the disciples are told by two angels that Jesus was taken into heaven and that he will return in the fashion in which he left them: "This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven" (v. 11). Jesus, seated on God's right, will thus come again on the clouds of heaven⁽⁴⁹⁾.

In conclusion, our redactional investigation of Luke-Acts has brought out that the exaltation of Jesus to God's right hand is related to his being the Son of God. The prediction at the trial of Jesus that this will take place "from now on" has been, according to Luke, realised in the ascension of Jesus. It is through his ascension that Jesus has assumed his position at the right hand of God. The ascension scene, viewed in this light, gives to the gospel a climactic conclusion and to Luke-Acts a point of departure. Peter preaches the exalted Jesus as *pais theou*, whom the Father has placed on his right side, and Paul preaches him as the Son of God.

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SOMMAIRE

Une recherche rédactionnelle sur Luc-Actes montre que l'exaltation de Jésus à la droite de Dieu est rapportée à sa filiation divine. La prédiction faite au procès de Jésus que ceci arriverait «depuis maintenant» s'est réalisée, selon Luc, à l'ascension de Jésus. C'est par son ascension que Jésus a pris sa position à la droite de Dieu. Vue dans cette lumière, la scène de l'ascension fournit à l'évangile une conclusion maximale et à Luc-Actes un point de départ. Pierre prêche comme *pais theou* le Jésus exalté, que le Père a placé à sa droite, et Paul le prêche comme Fils de Dieu.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ This was stated in Mark 14,62 and Matt 26,64, but not in Luke 22,69.

The Northern Origin of Nehemiah 9 *

Many readers of the book of Nehemiah have noted that ch. 9 seems out of place within the narrative as a whole⁽¹⁾. There has also been considerable debate as to whether or not it belongs to the so-called Ezra Memoirs⁽²⁾. One of the most original solutions to these problems was that of A. C. Welch. More than sixty years ago he proposed that Nehemiah 9 originated as "a litany written for the worship of Northern Israel on the occasion of a day of fasting, confession, and prayer"⁽³⁾.

Among the main points which formed the basis for this conclusion were the following: (a) v. 26 refers to the slaying of prophets, an act which recalls the policy of Ahab recorded in 1 Kgs 19,10; (b) the catastrophe which befell the nation referred to in v. 32 is dated from the time of the kings of Assyria, a situation which fits

* A version of this paper was read at the Tenth World Congress of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, Israel, August 1989. On that occasion I had the opportunity to discuss this work with Prof. Sara Japhet of the Hebrew University. I am greatly indebted to her for several important suggestions incorporated into this the written version. Her influence will be seen especially towards the article's end.

For the material on the infinitive absolute, I have benefited greatly from detailed correspondence with Shlomo Izre'el of Tel-Aviv University. I am indebted to him not only for his assistance on this specific subject, which included furnishing me with a copy of the study cited in n. 15 with permission to cite it freely, but also for a critical reading of an earlier draft of the entire article.

(¹) For discussion see M. BEHM, "Nehemias 9" *BZ* 1 (1957) 59-69; and F. C. FENSHAM, *The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah* (Grand Rapids, MI 1982) 222.

(²) For the view that Nehemiah 9 is part of the Ezra Memoirs, see C. C. TORREY, *Ezra Studies* (Chicago 1910) 252-284; and D. J. A. CLINES, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther* (Grand Rapids, MI 1984) 6. For arguments to the contrary, see H. G. M. WILLIAMSON, *Ezra and Nehemiah* (Sheffield 1987) 26.

(³) A. C. WELCH, "The Source of Nehemiah IX", *ZAW* 47 (1929) 130-137, in particular 136. See also A. C. WELCH, "The Share of N. Israel in the Restoration of the Temple Worship", *ZAW* 48 (1930) 175-187.

the history of the northern kingdom of Israel; and (c) there is no mention of exile and restoration, events which otherwise are central to Ezra-Nehemiah. Furthermore, (d) the lengthy recitation of the history of the nation in vv. 6-37 is completely silent regarding David and Solomon, the two most glorious kings who ruled from Jerusalem⁽⁴⁾; and (e) there are numerous nexuses between this chapter and Deuteronomy 32⁽⁵⁾, a poem which almost certainly originated in northern Israel⁽⁶⁾.

In my review of the literature, I have not found a single instance of an exegete who has been convinced of Welch's hypothesis. His article is often quoted, and many of its specific ideas are accepted, but his view that Nehemiah 9 originated in northern Israel is simply never referred to. I am not sure how to account for this strange silence. Nevertheless, I believe Welch was correct, as the new approach taken in this article will attempt to demonstrate. The avenue I have in mind is the linguistic one, based on recent progress in the dialect geography of ancient Hebrew. This research affords us an objective tool by which to judge Welch's position that Nehemiah 9 originated in northern Israel.

Before presenting the evidence, it is necessary to say a few words about this new avenue in the field of Hebrew linguistics. It is obvious that the vast majority of biblical literature was composed in Judah in general or in Jerusalem in particular or by exiles from Judah and Jerusalem. Thus, the regional standard of the Bible may be called Judahite Hebrew (JH). But stories which emanate from the north, such as those concerning the northern judges or the northern kings, often reflect different grammatical usages⁽⁷⁾. In other

(4) F. C. FENSHAM, "Neh. 9 and Pss. 105, 106, and 136: Post-Exilic Historical Traditions in Poetic Form", *JNSL* 9 (1981) 44-45; and T. C. ESKENAZI, *In an Age of Prose: A Literary Approach to Ezra-Nehemiah* (Atlanta 1988) 22.

(5) Some were noted by Welch; see also S. HIDAL, "Some Reflections on Deuteronomy 32", *ASTI* 11 (1977-78) 15-21, especially 19.

(6) O. EISSFELDT, *Das Lied Moses Deuteronomium 32,1-43 und das Lehrgedicht Asaphs Psalm 78 samt einer Analyse der Umgebung des Mose-Liedes* (Berlin 1958) 42; and E. NIELSEN, "Historical Perspectives and Geographical Horizons: On the Question of North-Israelite Elements in Deuteronomy", *ASTI* 11 (1977-78) 82.

(7) Many have been collected in the two commentaries by C. F. BURNLEY, *Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Books of Kings* (Oxford 1903) 208-209; and *The Book of Judges* (London 1918) 171-176. For Kings see also M. COGAN - H. TADMOR, *II Kings* (Garden City, NY 1988) 9.

instances, these non-standard usages appear in texts where style-switching (a specific type of code-switching) is evident⁽⁸⁾. These divergences are to be attributed to a northern Hebrew dialect⁽⁹⁾. Moreover, most of these same usages are paralleled in the languages spoken to the north of Israel (Aramaic, Phoenician, and Ugaritic⁽¹⁰⁾) and in Trans-Jordan (Deir 'Alla, Ammonite and Moabite). The results of this line of research are: (a) we now are able to isolate "Israelian" texts in the Bible⁽¹¹⁾, and (b) we now may begin to write a grammar of northern Hebrew⁽¹²⁾.

While pursuing my own investigations into ancient Hebrew dialects, it became clear to me that Nehemiah 9 includes a significant concentration of northern Hebrew features. We turn now to a presentation of the data.

⁽⁸⁾ See S. A. KAUFMAN, "The Classification of the North West Semitic Dialects of the Biblical Period and Some Implications Thereof", *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies* (Panel Sessions: Hebrew and Aramaic Languages) (Jerusalem 1988) 55.

⁽⁹⁾ In some of my recent publications on Hebrew dialects (most will be cited below in the course of the discussion), I used the term Israelian Hebrew to refer to northern Hebrew. I have coined this term based on the usage of H. L. GINSBERG, *The Israelian Heritage of Judaism* (New York 1982). See the independent usage of the same term by S. GEVIRTZ, "Of Syntax and Style in the 'Late Biblical Hebrew' – 'Old Canaanite' Connection", *JANES* 18 (1986) 25-29.

⁽¹⁰⁾ I accept the classification system of H. L. GINSBERG, "The Northwest Semitic Languages", *Patriarchs* (ed. B. MAZAR) (World History of the Jewish People; New Brunswick, NJ 1970) 102-106, which places Phoenician and Ugaritic together in the "Phoenic" group.

⁽¹¹⁾ For illustrations of this method see G. A. RENDSBURG, "The Northern Origin of 'The Last Words of David' (2 Sam 23,1-7)", *Bib* 69 (1988) 113-121; G. A. RENDSBURG, "Additional Notes on 'The Last Words of David' (2 Sam 23,1-7)", *Bib* 70 (1989) 403-408; and G. A. RENDSBURG, *Linguistic Evidence for the Northern Origin of Selected Psalms* (Atlanta 1990). Other "Israelian" texts are noted below in the course of the discussion.

⁽¹²⁾ See G. A. RENDSBURG, "Morphological Evidence for Regional Dialects in Ancient Hebrew", *Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew* (ed. W. BODINE) (Winona Lake, IN, forthcoming); and the Appendix to RENDSBURG, *Psalms*, 105-107. For the theoretical framework see B. HALPERN, "Dialect Distribution in Canaan and the Deir Alla Inscriptions", "Working With No Data": *Semitic and Egyptian Studies Presented to Thomas O. Lambdin* (ed. D. M. GOLOMB) (Winona Lake, IN 1987) 119-139. Note especially his comment that "Canaan was linguistically cantonized" (139).

1. Twice in this chapter, in vv. 8 and 13, we encounter the infinitive absolute used as a finite verb. The first example reads as follows: *ûmāšā'tā 'et l'ēbābô ne'ēmān l'pānekā wēkārôt immô habbērît* "you found his heart faithful before you and you made a covenant with him", with the Qal infinitive absolute *kārôt* used as a finite verb. The second example reads as follows: *w'al har sīnay yāradtā wēdabbēr immāhem miššāmāyim* "you descended upon Mount Sinai and you spoke with them from heaven", with the Piel infinitive absolute *dabbēr* used as a finite verb.

This usage has engendered much discussion over the years, but what has rarely been pointed out is that this syntagma is in origin a northern feature. The cognate evidence certainly points in that direction, since it is more common in Ugaritic⁽¹³⁾, Phoenician⁽¹⁴⁾, and the Amarna letters from Byblos and other northern sites⁽¹⁵⁾,

(13) C. H. GORDON, *Ugaritic Textbook* (Rome 1967) 80; and S. SEGERT, *A Basic Grammar of the Ugaritic Language* (Berkeley 1984) 93.

(14) J. FRIEDRICH – W. RÖLLIG, *Phönizisch-punische Grammatik* (Rome 1970) 135-136; and S. SEGERT, *A Grammar of Phoenician and Punic* (Munich 1976) 197.

(15) Ten examples from Byblos, *EAT* 89:38-39; 109:40-46; 113:40-42; 116:27-28; 118:36-39; 129:32-34; 129:40-42; 132:30-35; 137:49; 362:25-29, were identified by W. L. MORAN, "The Use of the Canaanite Infinitive Absolute as a Finite Verb in the Amarna Letters from Byblos", *JCS* 4 (1950) 169-172. In a follow-up article, W. L. MORAN, "'Does Amarna Bear on Karatepe?' – An Answer", *JCS* 6 (1952) 76-80, an additional example was given, *EAT* 287:46, in a letter from Jerusalem. Concerning this last example, it is apposite to cite the opinion of W. L. MORAN, "The Syrian Scribe of the Jerusalem Amarna Letters", *Unity and Diversity: Essays in the History, Literature, and Religion of the Ancient Near East* (eds. H. GOEDICKE and J. J. M. ROBERTS) (Baltimore 1975) 146-166, that the scribe of the Jerusalem letters hailed from Syria to the north.

Three additional examples, *EAT* 173:12; 185:72, 364:21, were put forward in an unpublished paper by S. IZRE'EL, "Ve-shuv 'al (y)qtl 'nk u-Maqbilav ba-Leshonot ha-Kna 'aniyot". They are all from northern letters: *EAT* 173 mentions Amqi, i.e., the Beqa'; *EAT* 185 is from Ḥazi in the Beqa'; and *EAT* 364 is from Ashtaroth in Bashan. Some of these examples may be open to alternative readings and interpretations, especially *EAT* 173:12 in a broken context. For further study, see W. L. MORAN, *Les lettres d'el Amarna* (Paris 1987).

In short, it is clear that the evidence of the Amarna tablets supports the conclusion that the syntagma of the infinitive absolute as a finite verb is used more intensively in the northern dialects of Canaan.

than it is in other varieties of Canaanite⁽¹⁶⁾. The distribution of this usage in pre-exilic biblical texts also points to this conclusion (see below)⁽¹⁷⁾.

I have compiled the following lists of biblical examples from previous work on the subject conducted by A. Rubenstein⁽¹⁸⁾, J. Huesman⁽¹⁹⁾, and more recently B. Waltke and M. O'Connor⁽²⁰⁾. From the examples presented in these sources, I exclude from consideration Num 30,3; Deut 14,21; 15,2; Josh 9,20; 2 Kgs 19,29; Isa 8,6; 21,5; 22,13; Jer 7,9; Ezek 1,14; Joel 2,26. In these cases the infinitive absolute is used as an imperative (as reflected in the standard translations) or other phenomena are present.

(16) For general discussion see J. HUESMAN, "Finite Uses of the Infinitive Absolute", *Bib* 37 (1956) 271-284; and W.R. GARR, *Dialect Geography of Syria Palestine, 1000-586 B.C.E.* (Philadelphia 1985) 183-184. For a brief statement see W.L. MORAN, "The Hebrew Language in its Northwest Semitic Background", *The Bible and the Ancient Near East: Essays in Honor of William Foxwell Albright* (ed. G.E. WRIGHT) (Garden City, NY 1961) 61-62.

In a similar vein, in the Ugaritic, Phoenician and Amarna examples, the subject (be it noun or pronoun) is always expressed. But in the two examples in Neh 9,8.13 (as well as in some of the other biblical passages to be presented below), the subject is not expressed. Thus there is a slight difference in usage, but again I follow the lead of almost all scholars in the field in subsuming all varieties of the phenomenon under one syntagma.

(17) As S. Izre'el pointed out to me, the use of the infinitive absolute as a finite verb may also occur in the Yavneh Yam inscription, line 5. According to F.M. CROSS, "Epigraphic Notes on Hebrew Documents of the Eighth-Sixth Centuries B.C.: II. The Murabba'at Papyrus and the Letter Found Near Yavneh-Yam", *BASOR* 165 (1962) 44, n.43, the last word in the phrase *wyqsr bdk wyk l w'sm* is an infinitive absolute. But other interpretations are equally possible; see most importantly D. PARDEE, "The Judicial Plea from Mesad Hashavyahu (Yavneh-Yam): A New Philological Study", *Maarav* 1 (1978) 33-66. Cross' reading remains possible, but since it cannot be established beyond doubt, I prefer not to include it as an example of the syntagma under discussion.

(18) A. RUBINSTEIN, "A Finite Verb Continued by an Infinitive Absolute in Biblical Hebrew", *VT* 2 (1952) 362-367.

(19) HUESMAN, "Finite Uses of the Infinitive Absolute", 284-286. I exclude from consideration the passages adduced by Huesman through emendation of the Masoretic Text. Thus on pp. 286-295 of the above article and in the following: J. HUESMAN, "The Infinitive Absolute and the Waw + Perfect Problem", *Bib* 37 (1956) 410-434.

(20) B. WALTKE-M. O'CONNOR, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN 1990) 594-597.

Almost everyone who has studied the use of the infinitive absolute as a finite verb has noticed that its frequency greatly increases in the post-exilic books⁽²¹⁾. We will return to this point in a moment, but first I would like to concentrate on the examples of this construction from pre-exilic books. For it is here that the northern origin of this usage can be demonstrated.

From pre-exilic books I count the following examples as northern: Judg 7,19; 1 Sam 2,28; 22,13; 1 Kgs 9,25; 22,30; 2 Kgs 3,16; 4,43; Amos 4,5; Prov 12,7; 15,22; 17,12; and the following examples as southern: Exod 8,11; Lev 25,14; 1 Sam 25,26; Isa 5,5; 37,19. The southern provenance of the latter list is clear. With rare exceptions, such as the aphorisms concerning the northern tribes in Genesis 49 and Deuteronomy 33⁽²²⁾, the poem in Deuteronomy 32⁽²³⁾, etc., the Torah is a Judahite composition⁽²⁴⁾. 1 Samuel 25 is the story of David and Abigail set in southern Judah. And the two Isaiah passages come from a book that obviously originated in Jerusalem.

The northern origin of the former list can be demonstrated in the following ways. Judg 7,19 is part of the Gideon cycle; the two passages from 1 Samuel concern Eli (in Shiloh in the territory of Ephraim) and Saul (a Benjaminite)⁽²⁵⁾; 1 Kings 9 concerns Solomon, and yet there are so many Phoenicianisms in the description of his realm that I am forced to conclude that Phoenician scribes are responsible for the material⁽²⁶⁾; 1 Kings 22 deals with an Israelite king (Ahab?); the two passages from 2 Kings 3-4 are part

⁽²¹⁾ E. KAUTZSCH, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (Oxford 1910) 345; RUBINSTEIN, "A Finite Verb", 363; and WALTKE-O'CONNOR, *Syntax*, 595.

⁽²²⁾ On the former chapter, see G. A. RENDSBURG, "Israelian Hebrew Features in Genesis 49", forthcoming in the Stanley Gevirtz Memorial Volume. I hope to devote a similar study to the latter chapter in the future.

⁽²³⁾ EISSFELDT, *Das Lied Moses*.

⁽²⁴⁾ In my work on regional dialects, I have found no linguistic evidence to support the theories that "E" and "D" are northern sources.

⁽²⁵⁾ Benjamin, of course, is relatively south in the land of Canaan, and only a few miles north of Jerusalem. Yet many stories set in this territory nonetheless reveal a concentration of northern Hebrew features. See further RENDSBURG, *Psalms*, 4, n. 18.

⁽²⁶⁾ RENDSBURG, *Psalms*, 29-30. In other words, not only did Phoenician architects and craftsmen build the Temple, their scribes recorded the activities of the realm.

of the Elisha cycle; Amos is a northern prophet⁽²⁷⁾; and Proverbs is unquestionably a northern composition⁽²⁸⁾.

Accordingly, of the seventeen pre-exilic attestations of the infinitive absolute as a finite verb, only five are in Judahite sections of the Bible and twelve are in northern portions. This dichotomy becomes even more acute when one realizes that probably only about 20% of the Bible is of northern provenance. Thus, the ratio of this syntagma in pre-exilic literature is not 12:5 northern vs. southern, but approximately 60:5, or 12:1, northern vs. southern⁽²⁹⁾. In short, the distribution of this usage in the Bible accords with the cognate evidence from Phoenician, Ugaritic and Byblos Amarna. The lines of evidence converge to demonstrate that the use of the infinitive absolute as a finite verb was characteristic of northern dialects of Canaanite, including northern Hebrew.

The reader who is familiar with the presence of this usage in the Bible will have realized that until now I have omitted the data from Jeremiah. This book, after all, contains more examples of this syntagma than any other biblical book. The infinitive absolute is used as a finite verb ten times: 3,1; 7,18; 13,16Q; 14,5; 19,13; 22,14; 32,33.44; 36,23; 37,21. At first glance, Jeremiah might seem to be a southern book, especially as virtually all the action described therein occurred in Jerusalem. But Jeremiah hailed from Anathoth, a city in Benjamin, and it is not improbable that his language was marked by dialect traits of the region. Above I noted that the stories concerning Saul of Benjamin reveal a considerable number of northern characteristics, and the same appears to be true of the book of Jeremiah⁽³⁰⁾.

⁽²⁷⁾ On the language of Amos, as well as of Hosea, see C. RABIN, "Leshonam shel 'Amos ve-Hoshea'", *Iyyunim be-Sefer Tre-'Asar* (ed. B. Z. LURIA) (Jerusalem 1981) 117-136.

⁽²⁸⁾ W. F. ALBRIGHT, "Some Canaanite-Phoenician Sources of Hebrew Wisdom", *Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East* (eds. M. NOTH and D. W. THOMAS) (VTS 3; Leiden 1960) 1-15; GINSBERG, *Israelian Heritage*, 36; and Y. AVISHUR, *Stylistic Studies of Word-Pairs in Biblical and Ancient Semitic Literatures* (AOAT 210; Neukirchen-Vluy 1984) 440 and n. 6.

⁽²⁹⁾ My methodology is similar to that utilized by M. TSEVAT, *A Study of the Language of the Biblical Psalms* (Philadelphia 1955).

⁽³⁰⁾ On Benjamin, see above, n. 25. Space limitations prevent me from undertaking a detailed analysis of Jeremiah at this time. However, many northern Hebrew elements in Jeremiah are assembled in RENDSBURG,

As noted earlier, the use of the infinitive absolute as a finite verb appears more frequently in exilic and post-exilic books. The list follows: Isa 42,20; 59,4; Ezek 23,30.36.47; Hag 1,6.9; Zech 3,4; 7,5; 12,10; Job 15,35; Qoh 4,2; 8,9; 9,11; Esth 2,3; 3,13; 6,9; 8,9; 9,1.6.12.16-18; Dan 9,5.11; Neh 7,3; 8,8; 9,8.13; 1 Chr 5,20; 16,36; 2 Chr 28,19; 31,10. Even here, it should be noted, some of the sources are northern, namely Job⁽³¹⁾, Qohelet⁽³²⁾, and, if Welch's argument is accepted, Nehemiah 9. But the majority, of course, stems from clear Judahite material, i.e., either from Judah itself or from Judean exiles. The appearance of this northernism in exilic and post-exilic books is to be attributed to the influence of northern Hebrew on Judahite Hebrew during the 500s and beyond in the wake of the reunification of northern and southern exiles in Mesopotamia. This phenomenon was first discussed by C.H. Gordon and the very usage under consideration here was one of his prime evidences⁽³³⁾. In conclusion, the two examples of the use of the infinitive absolute as a finite verb in Neh 9,8; 9,13, may be put forward as our first point in favor of the northern origin of this chapter.

"Morphological Evidence". Moshe Bar-Asher of the Hebrew University informs me (oral communication) that he has conducted a detailed study of the language of Jeremiah and that he too finds numerous northern characteristics therein. One such example, I believe, is the *nomen agentis* form *qātōl*, common in Jeremiah and in Mishnaic Hebrew (MH). For examples from Jeremiah, see M. BAR-ASHER, "'Aḥduta ha-Historit shel ha-Lashon ha-ʿIvrit u-Meḥqar Leshon Ḥakhamim", *Meḥqarim be-Lashon* (ed. M. BAR-ASHER) (Jerusalem 1985) 93-94. For MH as a northern spoken dialect, see G.A. RENDSBURG, "The Galilean Background of Mishnaic Hebrew", *Studies on the Galilee in Late Antiquity* (ed. L. LEVINE) (New York, forthcoming).

⁽³¹⁾ Job is either a northern book (so D.N. FREEDMAN, "Orthographic Peculiarities in the Book of Job", *Eretz-Israel* 9 [1969] 35-44) and/or style-switching is in effect (so KAUFMAN, "Classification").

⁽³²⁾ The northern provenance of Qohelet was first postulated by M. DAHOOD, "Canaanite-Phoenician Influence in Qoheleth", *Bib* 33 (1962) 30-52, 191-221. In many ways he overstated his case, but the overall conclusion generally is correct. See now J.R. DAVILA, "Qoheleth and Northern Hebrew", *Sopher Mahir: Northwest Semitic Studies Presented to Stanislav Segert* (ed. E.M. COOK) (Winona Lake, IN 1990) = *Maarav* 5-6 (1990) 69-87; and RENDSBURG, "Galilean Background".

⁽³³⁾ C.H. GORDON, "North Israelite Influence on Postexilic Hebrew", *IEJ* 5 (1955) 85-88. See also E.Y. KUTSCHER, *A History of the Hebrew Language* (Jerusalem 1982) 85.

2. In v. 19 we encounter the irregular form *b^hhadderek* “in the way” with non-elision of the definite article (*h*) following a uni-consonantal prefixed preposition (*b*, *l*, *k*). This irregularity occurs elsewhere in the Bible in the following passages: 1 Sam 13,21; 2 Kgs 7,12K; Ezek 40,25; 47,22; Ps 36,6; Qoh 8,1; Neh 12,38; 2 Chr 10,7; 25,10; 29,27⁽³⁴⁾. The only parallel usage to the non-elision of *he* in this environment within the Canaanite sphere is its appearance eight times in Punic⁽³⁵⁾. Now it is true that this phenomenon does not occur in any standard Phoenician texts, but nevertheless we may suspect that it was native to some northern Canaanite dialects⁽³⁶⁾. There are indications of this in at least some of the aforementioned biblical attestations.

In 1 Sam 13,21 the action occurs in the territory of Benjamin and the story concerns the kingship of Saul; 2 Kgs 7,12K is in the mouth of an Israelite king (which one is not altogether certain); Ps 36,6 occurs in a psalm with many northern affinities⁽³⁷⁾; and Qoh 8,1 appears in a northern book (see above, n. 32).

When we add Neh 9,19 to this list, we find that five of the eleven attestations of this usage occur in northern texts. Once more, proportionately this is sufficient to label this phenomenon a characteristic of northern Hebrew. The remaining six passages are all in exilic or post-exilic compositions. Here we may again appeal to Gordon’s hypothesis that late biblical literature evinces northern grammatical features due to the reunion of Israelite exiles and Judahite exiles in Mesopotamia in the 6th century BC.

3. The forms *ʾāmām* “peoples” in v. 22 and *ʾamēmē* “peoples of” in v. 24 are reduplicatory plurals of a noun based on a geminate stem. Normally, Hebrew simply retains the gemination in

⁽³⁴⁾ I exclude from consideration 2 Sam 21,20.22 *l^hhārāpāh* = 1 Chr 20,6.8 *l^hhārāpāʾ*, where the *he* is apparently considered part of the title; Dan 8,16 *l^hhallāz* where the *he* is an essential part of the demonstrative pronoun, and the eight cases of *k^hhayyôm* “on this particular day” which is used to distinguish it from *kayyôm* “now”.

⁽³⁵⁾ FRIEDRICH – RÖLLIG, *Phönizisch-punische Grammatik*, 53.

⁽³⁶⁾ See already R. C. STEINER, *The Case for Fricative-Laterals in Proto-Semitic* (New Haven 1977) 43 and 55, n. 42.

⁽³⁷⁾ RENDSBURG, *Psalms*, 37-43. For earlier statements, see C. A. BRIGGS, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, Vol. 1 (New York 1906) 315; and L. A. F. LE MAT, *Textual Criticism and Exegesis of Psalm XXXVI* (Utrecht 1957) 103-104, 106-107.

such cases, e.g., *ām* "people", plural *ammīm*. But in a considerable number of instances the reduplicatory type appears⁽³⁸⁾. This latter method of forming the plural is standard in Aramaic, e.g., *immy* "peoples", *kddn* "pitchers", *lly* "shades"⁽³⁹⁾. It will not be surprising to learn that a good number of the reduplicatory plurals in the Bible appear in texts where northern origin may be detected. This was noted already by E. Y. Kutscher⁽⁴⁰⁾, though in the discussion which follows I present many additional examples.

Num 23,7 *harêrê* "mountains of" is in the mouth of Balaam, the Aramean prophet, in a section of the Bible laden with examples of style-switching⁽⁴¹⁾. Deut 33,15 *harêrê* "mountains of" occurs in Moses' blessing to the tribe of Joseph. Judges 5, a poem of unquestionably northern origin⁽⁴²⁾, includes two reduplicatory plurals: *āmāmekā* "your peoples" in v. 14 and *hiqêqê* "decisions of" in v. 15.

Ps 36,7 *harêrê* "mountains of" is in a northern poem; Ps 50,10 *harêrê* "mountains of", Ps 76,5 *harêrê* "mountains of", and Ps 77,18 *hāšāšekā* "your arrows", all appear in the Asaph collection; Ps 87,1 *harêrê* "mountains of" appears in the Korah collection; and Ps 133,3 *harêrê* "mountains of" occurs in a poem with northern connections⁽⁴³⁾.

⁽³⁸⁾ For the term "reduplicatory" and for the Afroasiatic background of this formation, see J. H. GREENBERG, "Internal *a*-Plurals in Afroasiatic (Hamito-Semitic)", *Afrikanistische Studien* (ed. J. LUKAS) (Berlin 1955) 198-204.

⁽³⁹⁾ S. SEGERT, *Altaramäische Grammatik* (Leipzig 1975) 537, 546.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ E. Y. KUTSCHER, "Ha-Šafa ha-ʿIvrit u-Venot Livyata be-Meshekh ha-Dorot", *Hadoar* 47 (1968-69) 507-509 (reprinted in E. Y. KUTSCHER, *Hebrew and Aramaic Studies* [Jerusalem 1977] *šh-štw*). For a brief earlier statement, see BURNEY, *Judges*, 172.

⁽⁴¹⁾ See also my remarks in RENDSBURG, "'The Last Words of David'", 115-116.

⁽⁴²⁾ BURNEY, *Judges*, 171-176; and C. RABIN, "The Emergence of Classical Hebrew", *The Age of the Monarchies: Culture and Society* (ed. A. MALAMAT) (World History of the Jewish People; Jerusalem 1979) 71-78, 293-295, in particular 74, 293, n. 4.

⁽⁴³⁾ On Psalm 36, see above, n. 37. — On the northern provenance of the Asaph psalms, see M. J. BUSS, "The Psalms of Asaph and Korah", *JBL* 82 (1963) 382-392, especially 384. The linguistic evidence is presented in RENDSBURG, *Psalms*, 69-81.

On the northern provenance of the Korah psalms, see M. J. GOULDER, *The Psalms of the Sons of Korah* (Sheffield 1982). For the linguistic evidence, see RENDSBURG, *Psalms*, 45-60.

Prov 29,13 *teḳākîm* "oppressions" appears in a northern book (see above, n.28). Cant 2,17; 4,6 *šēlālîm* "shadows" and Cant 4,8 *harêrê* "mountains of" occur in a book with northern affinities⁽⁴⁴⁾. Finally, Jer 6,4 *šil'elê* "shadows of" appears in a book where Aramaic influence increasingly may be seen and/or we must reckon with the Benjaminite dialect. Thus we are left with only one occurrence which does not fit our interpretation: Hab 3,6.

In short, we have isolated a grammatical feature which links Aramaic and northern Hebrew, and we can use the presence of *āmāmîm* in v.22 and *'amēmê* in v.24 as another point to support the argument for the northern provenance of Nehemiah 9.

4. The phrase *'ammê hā'ārāšôt* "peoples of the land" in v.30 is a "double plural", that is, both the *nomen regens* and the *nomen rectum* of a construct chain are in the plural. S. Gevirtz recently noted that this grammatical usage is characteristic of northern texts such as Judges 5, Phoenician inscriptions, and the Amarna letters from Byblos⁽⁴⁵⁾. To the examples adduced by Gevirtz, add the following instances from northern psalms: Ps 29,1 *benê 'ēlîm* "sons of the gods", Ps 45,10 *benôt melākîm* "daughters of kings", Ps 74,13 *rā'šê tannînîm* "heads of the sea monsters", Ps 77,6 *š'enôt 'ōlāmîm* "years of eternities", Ps 78,49 *mal'ākê ra'im* "messengers of evil", Ps 116,9 *'aršôt haḥayyim* "lands of the living"⁽⁴⁶⁾. It is

On Psalm 133, I have in mind the mention of Hermon in v.3, the use of the relative pronoun *še-* in vv.2-3, and the presence of the root *n'm*. On this last point, see RENDSBURG, "Additional Notes". In general, see RENDSBURG, *Psalms*, 91-93.

(⁴⁴) S. R. DRIVER, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (New York 1906) 448-449; and Y. AVISHUR, "Le-Ziqa ha-Signonit Beyn Shir ha-Shirim ve-Sifrut 'Ugarit", *Beth Miqra* 59 (1974) 508-525.

(⁴⁵) GEVIRTZ, "Of Syntax and Style", 28-29; and S. GEVIRTZ, "Asher in the Blessing of Jacob (Genesis xlix 20)", *VT* 37 (1987) 160.

(⁴⁶) On Psalm 29 as a northern composition, see H. L. GINSBERG, "A Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter", *Atti del XIX Congresso Internazionale degli Orientalisti (Roma 1935)* (Roma 1938) 472-476; and RENDSBURG, *Psalms*, 35-37.

Psalm 45 is in the Korah collection, on which see above, n.43. Moreover, many previous scholars have argued that this poem is a northern composition based on its contents. See, e.g., BRIGGS, *Psalms*, 384; and M. BUTTENWEISER, *The Psalms* (Chicago 1938) 85-89.

For the three examples from the Asaph group, see above, n.43.

For Psalm 116 as a northern poem, see RENDSBURG, *Psalms*, 83-86.

true that double plurals occur elsewhere in the Bible where northern provenance is not indicated, e.g., in Chronicles⁽⁴⁷⁾, but the overall picture still favors Gevirtz's conclusion⁽⁴⁸⁾. Accordingly, the presence of this syntagma in Neh 9,30 is a fourth linguistic point favoring Welch's position.

5. The phrase *šamtā šēmō*, literally "you placed his name", in v. 7, is paralleled elsewhere in the Bible only in 2 Kgs 17,34 *šām šēmō*, and Judg 8,31 *wayyāšēm 'et šēmō*, both literally "he placed his name"⁽⁴⁹⁾. M. Cogan and H. Tadmor characterized these words as "an unusual expression"⁽⁵⁰⁾, and Burney referred to "this somewhat peculiar usage"⁽⁵¹⁾. The oddity, which any seasoned reader of the Bible can sense, is to be explained by recognizing the northern nature of the idiom. 2 Kings 17 is a lengthy chapter dealing with the final fate of the northern kingdom of Israel, and Judges 8 is part of the Gideon cycle with its many northern affinities. As Welch argued, Nehemiah 9 was also originally composed by a northern Israelite.

The cognate evidence supports our conclusion that this feature is a northern Hebrew trait. In Phoenician we encounter the very similar expression *št 'nk šm*, literally "I placed its name", in Karatepe A ii 9-10, 17-18. Although the Phoenician phrase employs *št* instead of *šm*, the two verbs are of course similar. Both forms occur in both Hebrew and Phoenician, though *šm* is more common in the former, whereas *št* is more common in the latter⁽⁵²⁾. The evidence of Phoenician *št šm* and the distribution of *šm šm* in the Bible converge to demonstrate the northern Hebrew nature of this usage.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ R. POLZIN, *Late Biblical Hebrew: Toward an Historical Typology of Biblical Hebrew Prose* (Missoula, MT 1976) 42.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Double plurals are also common in MH. See M.H. SEGAL, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew* (Oxford 1927) 187; and KUTSCHER, *History*, 129. Since, in my opinion, MH is based on a form of northern Hebrew (see above, n. 30), this would be further support for Gevirtz's view.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ The usage in Dan 1,7 is slightly different; alternatively this late example is an instance of northern influence on post-exilic Hebrew due to the reunification of northern and southern exiles in Mesopotamia.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ COGAN-TADMOR, *II Kings*, 213.

⁽⁵¹⁾ BURNEY, *Judges*, 265.

⁽⁵²⁾ R.S. TOMBACK, *A Comparative Semitic Lexicon of the Phoenician and Punic Languages* (Missoula, MT 1978) 322, 334-335. I am aware that Tomback's book is not a concordance, yet it is obvious from his entries that *št* appears more frequently in Phoenician than *šm*.

6. In v. 6 the 2 msg personal pronoun appears in the consonantal text as 't. This orthography appears elsewhere in Num 11,15; Deut 5,24; 1 Sam 24,19; Ezek 28,14; Ps 6,4; Job 1,10; Qoh 7,22. (In three of these eight cases, the form is vocalized 'at(t); in the other five instances the Qere reads 'attāh. Since I am only concerned with the consonantal text here, I merge these two groups into one category.) In Phoenician the same spelling occurs⁽⁵³⁾, so we may postulate that 't represents another northern feature. This is borne out by the distribution of the remaining biblical examples. Ezek 28,14 occurs within the prophet's speech against Tyre⁽⁵⁴⁾, and Job and Qoheleth are both northern compositions (see above, nn. 31 and 32). Accordingly, four of the eight usages of 2msg 't are in northern contexts, a ratio which points to the northern Hebrew character of this feature.

7. In v.35 occurs the expression ūb^e'ereṣ hār^eḥābāh w^ehaššēmēnāh "and in the broad and fat land" with the unique word pair rḥb and šmn. Although the semantics are slightly different, this word-pair occurs elsewhere in Northwest Semitic only in Ugaritic. The passage is UT 128:iv:4-5, 15-16 where šmn mrik/h "a fat one of your/her fatlings" parallels rḥbt yn "a broad vessel (= flagon) of wine"⁽⁵⁵⁾. As Y. Avishur amply demonstrated, the same word-pair, in this case rḥb and šmn, can occur both in poetry as parallel terms (as in the Ugaritic passage) and in prose as collocated terms (as in Neh 9,35)⁽⁵⁶⁾. The word-pair under consideration, occurring only here in the Bible, must have been characteristic of northern Hebrew though not of Judahite Hebrew.

8. The word 'ēlōah "God" appears in v.17. This vocable is most likely a northern trait, though I admit that the argument in favor of such a conclusion is colored by the fact that it appears

(⁵³) FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, *Phönizisch-punische Grammatik*, 45-46. Again, I am only concerned with the orthography here. It is possible that the Phoenician 2msg personal pronoun was pronounced similarly to the Hebrew form 'attāh; see SEGERT, *Grammar of Phoenician and Punic*, 95, who cited the possibly relevant form from Plautus' *Poenulus*, namely, *etha*.

(⁵⁴) There are many examples of "addressee-switching" in the prophetic oracles directed at the foreign nations; see G. A. RENDSBURG, "The Strata of Biblical Hebrew" (forthcoming).

(⁵⁵) J. GRAY, *The KRT Text in the Literature of Ras Shamra* (Leiden 1964) 20, 61.

(⁵⁶) AVISHUR, *Stylistic Studies of Word-Pairs*.

forty-one times in the book of Job. On the other hand, it also appears in other northern texts: Deut 32,15,17; 2 Kgs 17,31K; Ps 50,22; Prov 30,5. The first two instances are in a northern poem (see above, n. 6); 2 Kings 17 recounts the history of the northern kingdom of Israel; Psalm 50 is part of the Asaph collection, which is northern in origin (see above, n. 43); and Proverbs 30 not only is in a northern book (see above, n. 28), but it appears in the Massa material, which presumably originates in the Syrian Desert region north-east of Israel⁽⁵⁷⁾.

By contrast, *'ēlôah* appears only five times in identifiably Judahite material, namely, Hab 1,11; 3,3; Ps 18,32; 114,7; 139,19. Elsewhere it occurs in Isa 44,8; Dan 11,37-39 (4x); 2 Chr 32,15; each of these instances requires additional comment. For the first of them, we may invoke the theory of northern Hebrew influence on exilic and post-exilic literature. In Daniel it is most likely that Aramaic influence is at work; the cognate form *'lh* (vocalized *'ēlāh* in Biblical Aramaic) is widespread in all the Aramaic dialects. The last-cited verse, 2 Chr 32,15, is part of the speech of the Assyrian emissaries to Hezekiah. This passage has no exact equivalent in the parallel texts in 2 Kings 18 and Isaiah 36, but in general the words of 2 Chr 32,15 are part of the speech of Rabshakeh in 2 Kgs 18,29; Isa 36,14⁽⁵⁸⁾. Rabshakeh, it has been argued by several scholars, was an Israelite⁽⁵⁹⁾. So it would not be surprising to find a northern Hebrew word in his vocabulary. Alternatively, given the widespread use of Aramaic in the Neo-Assyrian empire, it would not be surprising to find *'ēlôah*, the Hebrew cognate to Aramaic *'ēlāh*, in the speech of a Neo-Assyrian diplomat.

In light of (a) the Aramaic cognate *'ēlāh*, (b) the widespread use of *'ēlôah* in Job, and (c) its not uncommon appearance in other northern texts, I conclude that this word is a northern Hebrew lexeme. Its occurrence in Neh 9,17 is another piece of evidence in favor of the northern origin of this chapter.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ On the location of Massa, see I. EPH'AL, *The Ancient Arabs* (Jerusalem 1982) 218-219. On other northern linguistic elements in the Massa material at the end of Proverbs, see RENDSBURG, *Psalms*, 25-26, 39, 48.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ See conveniently A. BENDAVID, *Maqbilot ba-Miqra'* (Jerusalem 1972) 145.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ H. TADMOR, "Rabshaqeh", *EnšMiqr* 7 (1976) 323-325. See also C. COHEN, "Neo-Assyrian Elements in the First Speech of the Biblical Rab-šaḳê", *Israel Oriental Studies* 9 (1979) 32-48.

Altogether, there are eight northern Hebrew traits in Nehemiah 9. Such a concentration of northern forms can only be accounted for by concluding that Welch was correct in his belief that the chapter originally was composed in northern Israel. This answers the question of *where* Nehemiah 9 was written, but the document still is open to further investigation. In particular, it remains to be asked *when* was the chapter written, and it is to this issue that the remainder of this paper will be devoted.

Although Welch was correct in his assumption that the composition emanated from the north, he was incorrect in his belief that it dated to the time of Josiah. In Welch's words:

Josiah was seeking to extend his authority over the derelict province, was casting down the bamoth there and was endeavouring to unite N. and S. Israel by the bonds of their common faith. The two psalms [i.e., Psalms 44 and 80, which Welch also proposed as northern in origin] and the chapter in Neh represent the response of the loyalists in N. Israel to this effort on the part of the Judean king⁽⁶⁰⁾.

This position is perfectly sensible, but it will not stand up to the linguistic evidence.

The endeavor of the first half of this article, namely, the use of dialect geography for *locating* the origin of a particular document, is a relatively new enterprise. On the other hand, the use of diachronic comparison for *dating* a particular document is an already well-established tool in the study of the Hebrew Bible. Accordingly, in the discussion which follows, I do not tread new paths, but rather I base the material on the labors of two individuals, specifically A. Hurvitz⁽⁶¹⁾ and R. Polzin⁽⁶²⁾, who have devoted their work to the question of Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH).

⁽⁶⁰⁾ WELCH, "The Share of N. Israel", 177. In WELCH, "The Source of Nehemiah IX", he is less specific about dating the chapter.

⁽⁶¹⁾ The two most important works are A. HURVITZ, *Beyn Lashon le-Lashon* (Jerusalem 1972); and A. HURVITZ, *A Linguistic Study of the Relationship Between the Priestly Source and the Book of Ezekiel* (CahRB 20; Paris 1982).

⁽⁶²⁾ POLZIN, *Late Biblical Hebrew*. However, this work cannot be used uncritically. See my extensive review: G. A. RENDSBURG, "Late Biblical Hebrew and the Date of 'P'", *JANES* 12 (1980) 65-80. Below I cite several of Polzin's points characteristic of LBH; in each case I accept the validity of the argumentation as per the aforementioned article.

I may summarize my findings and conclusion as follows: Nehemiah 9 contains five prominent LBH features, leading me to conclude that it dates to the post-exilic period. Since Hurvitz and Polzin have already done the groundwork, I refrain from detailed presentation of the data. Instead, summary statements will suffice.

1. Neh 9,29 uses the 3 msg perfect *ḥāyāh* “live” instead of the standard form *ḥay*. The former appears elsewhere only in Ezekiel, Qohelet and Esther, and is to be considered a trait of LBH⁽⁶³⁾.

2. Twice in Nehemiah, in vv.17 and 31, the late usage *ḥannûn weraḥûm* “gracious and compassionate” is used, in contrast to the earlier ordering *raḥûm wəḥannûn* “compassionate and gracious”⁽⁶⁴⁾.

3. In v.5 appears the phrase *ʾad hāʾôlām* “forever”, with the definite article. This is a late usage, in contrast to the standard usage *ʾad ʾôlām*, without the definite article⁽⁶⁵⁾.

4. LBH reflects a radically reduced use of *ʾet* with pronominal suffix; instead the pronominal suffix attached to the verb predominates. In Nehemiah 9, there are no instances of the former usage and 23 of the latter⁽⁶⁶⁾.

5. LBH exhibits a preference for plural forms of words which earlier had been used in the singular. Neh 9,28 includes one example of this phenomenon, namely, the use of the word *ʾittîm* “times”, versus standard *ʾet* “time”. The former occurs almost exclusively in Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah, Daniel and Chronicles⁽⁶⁷⁾.

The linguistic study of Nehemiah 9 conducted here demonstrates that this chapter is both northern and late. Eight features demonstrate the document to be northern, and five elements reveal its lateness. There is an additional feature which points in both these directions. I refer to the twofold use of abstract nouns ending in *-ût*: *ʾabdût* “slavery” in v.17 and *malkût* “kingdom” in v.35. These words typically are classified as late vocables, and the *-ût* ending itself is considered a late feature, due to increased Aramaic influence⁽⁶⁸⁾. I accept these findings in a general sense, but with one important qualification. Nouns ending in *-ût* become more

⁽⁶³⁾ HURVITZ, *Priestly Source and the Book of Ezekiel*, 47.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ HURVITZ, *Beyn Lashon le-Lashon*, 104-106.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ Ibid., 158-159.

⁽⁶⁶⁾ POLZIN, *Late Biblical Hebrew*, 30.

⁽⁶⁷⁾ Ibid., 42.

⁽⁶⁸⁾ On the lateness of these two words, though without mentioning Aramaic influence, see POLZIN, *Late Biblical Hebrew*, 142, 147. For specific reference to Aramaic, see KAUTZSCH, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, 241. For

common in LBH, due to Aramaic influence, but they can also appear in pre-exilic Hebrew. When they do occur in earlier texts, these compositions are more likely to be northern ones⁽⁶⁹⁾.

The very word *malkût* is a good example, since its appearance in at least two pre-exilic passages serves to illustrate this point. In Num 24,7 it is used in the mouth of the Aramean prophet Balaam as an example of style-switching, and in Ps 45,7 we are dealing with a northern poem (see above, n.46). In like fashion I believe we can explain the inordinate number of nouns ending in *-ût* in Proverbs. Note such unique vocables as *l'zût* "crookedness" in 4,24, *iqšût* "crookedness" in 4,24; 6,12, *rip'ût* "healing" in 3,8, etc. Their presence in Proverbs at a relatively high frequency is due to the book's northern provenance (see above, n.28). I conclude, therefore, that the two usages of this nominal ending in Nehemiah 9, namely *'abdût* in v.17 and *malkût* in v.35, may be added to the body of evidence presented above concerning both the northern origin and the late date of this document⁽⁷⁰⁾.

It remains now to situate this composition within the history of ancient Israel. The linguistic evidence, of course, points to a community of Israelites in the northern portion of the country during the Persian period⁽⁷¹⁾. There is hardly a great deal of evidence pointing to the existence of such a community, but one

further discussion see M. WAGNER, *Die lexicalischen und grammatikalischen Aramaismen im alttestamentlichen Hebräisch* (Berlin 1966) 130-131.

⁽⁶⁹⁾ I exclude from the discussion the *-ût* ending in nouns based on IIIy verbs. In these cases, e.g., *d'mût* "likeness", *k'esût* "covering", *g'e'ût* "haughtiness", *z'e'nût* "whoredom", etc., the ending is standard. Failure to make this distinction somewhat weakens the argument attempted by D.C. FREDERICKS, *Qoheleth's Language* (Lewiston, NY 1988) 137-138, concerning the frequency of the nominal ending *-ût* in Qohelet.

⁽⁷⁰⁾ It should be noted that in actuality the *-ût* suffix is a proto-Semitic form, for it appears in Old Akkadian and Eblaite already. For the former, see I.J. GELB, *Old Akkadian Writing and Grammar* (Chicago 1961) 138. For the latter, at least one example can be cited, namely *a-ḫu-du-um*, *a-ḫu-tum* "brotherhood", for which see P. FRONZAROLI, "The Eblaic Lexicon: Problems and Appraisal", *Studies on the Language of Ebla* (ed. P. FRONZAROLI) (Quaderni di Semitistica 13; Florence 1984) 135. Also germane is the Egyptian abstract suffix *-wt*; see E. EDEL, *Altägyptische Grammatik*, I (Rome 1955) 102-104. But the proto-Semitic (proto-Afroasiatic [?]) nature of the *-ût* suffix does not effect the specifics of the preceding discussion.

⁽⁷¹⁾ Most of our northern Hebrew texts are pre-exilic, e.g., the stories of the northern judges and the northern kings, Hosea, etc. But I also have

may be assumed to have been present nonetheless. Certainly, failure to recognize the presence of northern Israelites in Samaria and Galilee during the Persian period can cause one to reach too hasty a conclusion.

For example, H. G. M. Williamson, in an otherwise excellent study with important contributions to the understanding of Nehemiah 9⁽⁷²⁾, had the following to say: "In seeking to formulate a positive proposal concerning Neh. 9, the evidence outlined above can lead us to think only in terms of the Judaeen community which was never exiled to Babylon but which continued to inhabit the decimated land during the period of the exile and after"⁽⁷³⁾. Williamson recognized, as Welch before him had, that Nehemiah 9 does not refer to the exile and restoration and thus must have stemmed from a community which did not experience these events. Apparently he was misled by the assumption that such a community must have been a Judaeen one. The linguistic evidence, to reiterate the point made above, suggests an Israelite community⁽⁷⁴⁾.

In this regard, I would like to conclude by citing one of the few scholars who countenance an Israelite community during the Persian period. S. Japhet, in a discussion of the various communities in the land of Israel during the Persian period, spoke of: (a) "the 'returned exiles'", (b) "those inhabitants of the kingdom of Judah who were not exiled at all, and who remained in the land", and (c) "the Israelite inhabitants of northern Israel who remained settled in Samaria and in Galilee after the Assyrian conquest"⁽⁷⁵⁾. About this

no doubt that northern Hebrew continued to be used in Samaria and Galilee after 721 BC. The presence of Phoenician, Aramaic, etc., would have continued to create the same or similar isoglosses regardless of the downfall of the kingdom of Israel. This is true not only for the Persian period, but for the Hellenistic and Roman periods as well. The Galilean origin of MH, alluded to earlier (see above, n. 30), would fit into this picture as well.

⁽⁷²⁾ H. G. M. WILLIAMSON, "Structure and Historiography in Nehemiah 9", *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies* (Panel Sessions: Bible Studies and Ancient Near East) (Jerusalem 1988) 117-131.

⁽⁷³⁾ *Ibid.*, 129. For a more popular treatment, see H. G. M. WILLIAMSON, "Laments at the Destroyed Temple", *Bible Review* 6:4 (1990) 12-17, 44.

⁽⁷⁴⁾ From the linguistic viewpoint, in theory Nehemiah 9 could have been composed by descendants of the Israelite exiles of 721 BC. However, the chapter's lack of reference to exile precludes such a conclusion.

⁽⁷⁵⁾ S. JAPHET, "People and Land in the Restoration Period", *Das Land Israel in biblischer Zeit* (ed. G. STRECKER) (Göttingen 1983) 103-125, especially 104-105.

third group, Japhet added that "it can be stated with assurance that the Assyrians did not annihilate the Israelite population of the North, and that the rural population of Samaria and Galilee remained and continued to exist ... in the land of Israel in the time of the Restoration" ⁽⁷⁶⁾.

In short, an Israelite community continued uninterruptedly in the regions of Samaria and Galilee, regardless of the occupation of their land by Assyrians and Babylonians and of the deportations of 733, 721, 597 and 586 BC ⁽⁷⁷⁾. We know precious little about these people. But if the analysis presented here is correct, at the very least we have recovered one of their literary remains ⁽⁷⁸⁾.

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SOMMAIRE

En 1929 A. C. Welch soutint que Ne 9 était un texte originellement écrit par les israélites du nord en 720 av.J.-C. Cette hypothèse est partiellement reprise ici, étant donné la présence en ce chapitre de certains traits (huit) de l'hébreu parlé dans le nord du pays. Mais cette section a aussi cinq caractéristiques de l'hébreu biblique tardif qui favorisent une composition post-exilique. En conséquence Ne 9 est un document tardif provenant du nord: c'est le produit d'une communauté vivant au nord du pays et y restant après 721 jusqu'à la période perse.

⁽⁷⁶⁾ Ibid., 105.

⁽⁷⁷⁾ Traditions exist among segments of the Jewish people to the present day about descent from non-exiled Israelites. The most celebrated case is the village of Peqi'in in northern Galilee; see M. AVI-YONAH-J. BRASLAVI, "Peki'in", *EncJud* 13 (1971) 216-218. For a brief mention of a linguistic trait common to the Arabic and Hebrew of these villagers, see A. BAR-ADON, *The Rise and Decline of a Dialect: A Study in the Revival of Modern Hebrew* (The Hague 1975) 35. My thanks to Samuel Morell of the State University of New York at Binghamton for bringing this volume to my attention.

Of course, larger Jewish communities in the Near East claim descent from the exiles of 733 and 721, e.g., the Jews of Ethiopia who claim the tribe of Dan as their ancestors. See briefly GORDON, "North-Israelite Influence", 87, n. 6.

⁽⁷⁸⁾ For another composition reflecting both northern and late language, see my remarks on Psalm 133 in RENDSBURG, *Psalms*, 91-93, 103-104.

ANIMADVERSIONES

The Babylonian Calendar and the Chronology of the Last Kings of Judah

The chronology of the last kings of Judah is discussed extensively in the scholarly literature. Researchers have raised many hypotheses and suggested different methods for the resolution of the complicated chronological problems of this period. No method which has been proposed, however, is consistent with all the information we possess. All the scholars, without exception, establish the date of the surrender of Jehoiachin, king of Judah, as the second day of Adar, the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar II, king of Babylon (March 16, 597 BC), following the Babylonian chronicle published by D. J. Wiseman in 1956 (BM 21946, rec., ls. 11-13)⁽¹⁾. This unique date is undoubtedly the most precise in Israelite history during the biblical period and constitutes one of the cornerstones of biblical chronology. Is it possible that this date has been interpreted incorrectly, and that this is the reason why scholars have not been able to propose a system providing a reasonable explanation of all the biblical and external data relating to the period under discussion?

We will precede the discussion itself with a critical survey of the various methods proposed by scholars. Among scholars there is wide agreement regarding the two following issues: 1) most researchers are of the opinion that the reckoning system in practice in Judah at the time was the Post-Dating System⁽²⁾. 2) In the opinion of many scholars, Josiah died in Megiddo in the month of Sivan, or at the latest, at the beginning of Tamuz 609 (BM 21901, ls. 66-75)⁽³⁾. On the other hand, scholars are divided on

⁽¹⁾ D. J. WISEMAN, *Chronicles of Chaldaean Kings, 626-556 B.C.* (London 1956) 66-67.

⁽²⁾ For a different opinion see H. CAZELLES, "587 ou 586?", *The Word of the Lord Shall Go Forth: Essays in Honor of D. N. Freedman* (ed. C. L. MEYERS-M. O'CONNOR) (Winona Lake 1983) 427-435. Cazelles supposed that the years in Judah were numbered according to the Egyptian system in which the king's official first year begins with his accession day. For this system in Egypt see A. H. GARDINER, "Regnal Years and Civil Calendar in Pharaonic Egypt", *JEA* 31 (1945) 11-28; J. FINEGAN, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology* (Princeton 1964) 77ff.; W. BARTA, "Das Jahr in Datumsangaben und Seine Bezeichnungen", *Aegypten und Altes Testament: Festschrift Elmar Edel* (ed. M. GÖRG-E. PUSCH) (Bamberg 1979) 35-42.

⁽³⁾ Cf. C. J. GADD, *The Fall of Nineveh* (London 1923) 36, 41-42. The Egyptian army crossed the Euphrates in Tamuz, and their march from Megiddo to the Euphrates took about 30 days. Cf. D. J. A. CLINES, "Regnal Year Reckoning in the Last Years of the Kingdom of Judah", *AJBA* 2 (1972) 30-31, 34; I. EPH'AL, "On Warfare and Military Control in the Ancient Near Eastern Empires", *History, Historiography and Interpretation* (ed. H. TADMOR-M. WEINFELD) (Jerusalem 1983) 99.

two questions: 1) Did the new year fall in Judah, at the end of the First Temple period, on 1 Nisan, 1 Tishri, or 1 Heshvan? 2) In which year was Jerusalem destroyed: 587 or 586? Many are of the opinion that the new year fell on 1 Nisan: some propose a later date for the fall of the city, in 586⁽⁴⁾, while others support an earlier date, in 587⁽⁵⁾. In contrast, all the scholars who establish 1 Tishri⁽⁶⁾ or 1 Heshvan⁽⁷⁾ as the date of the new year hold

⁽⁴⁾ H. TADMOR, "Chronology of the Last Kings of Judah", *JNES* 15 (1956) 226-230; id., "Chronology", *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, IV (Jerusalem 1963) cols. 274-276 [Hebrew]; C. SCHEDL, "Nochmals das Jahr der Zerstörung Jerusalems, 587 oder 586 v. Chr.", *ZAW* 74 (1962) 209-213; E. STERN, "Israel at the Close of the Period of the Monarchy: An Archaeological Survey", *BA* 38 (1975) 26-56; and recently W. H. BARNES, *Studies in the Chronology of the Divided Monarchy of Israel* (Ph. D. Thesis. Ann Arbor 1986) 195, 200; M. COGAN - H. TADMOR, *II Kings* (AB; Garden City, NY 1988), 303-324, 341.

⁽⁵⁾ J. BEGRICH, *Die Chronologie der Könige von Israel und Juda* (Tübingen 1929) 141-146, 197 ff.; S. MOWINCKEL, "Die Chronologie der israelitischen und jüdischen Könige", *Acta Orientalia* 10 (1932) 199-203; W. F. ALBRIGHT, "The Seal of Eliakim and the Latest Preexilic History of Judah, with Some Observations on Ezekiel", *JBL* 51 (1932) 77-106, esp. 85; id., "The Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar Chronicles", *BASOR* 143 (1956) 28-33; D. N. FREEDMAN, "The Babylonian Chronicle", *BA* 19 (1956) 50-60; M. NOTH, "Die Einnahme von Jerusalem im Jahre 597 v. Chr.", *ZDPV* 74 (1958) 133-157; E. KUTSCH, "Zur Chronologie der letzten jüdischen Königs (Josia bis Zedekia)", *ZAW* 71 (1959) 270-274; id., "Das Jahr der Katastrophe 587 v. Chr.", *Bib* 55 (1974) 520-545; A. JEPSEN, "Zur Chronologie der Könige von Israel und Juda", *Untersuchungen zur israelitisch-jüdischen Chronologie* (ed. A. JEPSEN - R. HANHART) (BZAW 88; Berlin 1964) 21-28; E. H. HEATON, *The Hebrew Kingdoms* (Oxford 1968) 126-132; W. ZIMMERLI, *Ezekiel* (KAT XIII; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1969) 564; K. T. ANDERSEN, "Die Chronologie der Könige von Israel und Juda", *Studia Theologica* 13 (1969) 69-114, esp. 108-112; K. E. POHLMANN, *Studien zu Jeremiabuch: Ein Beitrag zur Frage der Entstehung des Jeremiasbuches* (FRLANT 118; Göttingen 1978) 205; P. R. ACKROYD, *Israel under Babylonian and Persia* (Oxford 1979) 3 ff.; J. BRIGHT, *A History of Israel* (Philadelphia 1981) 324-330; J. READE, "Mesopotamian Guidelines for Biblical Chronology", *Syro-Mesopotamian Studies* 4/1 (1981) 1-9; G. H. JONES, *1 and 2 Kings* (NCB; London 1984) 27; H. DONNER, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel und seiner Nachbarn in Grundzügen*, I (Göttingen 1984) 229 ff.

⁽⁶⁾ E. R. THIELE, "New Evidence on the Chronology of the Last Kings of Judah", *BASOR* 143 (1956) 22-27; id., *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids 1983) 179-192; A. MALAMAT, "A New Record of Nebuchadnezzar's Palestinian Campaigns", *IEJ* 6 (1956) 246-256; id., "The Last Kings of Judah and the Fall of Jerusalem", *IEJ* 18 (1968) 137-156, esp. 146 ff.; id., "The Twilight of Judah: In the Egyptian-Babylonian Maelstrom", *VTS* 28 (1975) 123-145, esp. 124 ff.; K. A. KITCHEN, "Chronology of the Old Testament", *New Bible Dictionary* (London 1962) 212-223; S. J. DE VRIES, "Chronology of the Old Testament", *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (New York-Nashville 1962) 580-599, esp. 594 ff.; S. H. HORN, "The Babylonian Chronicle and the Ancient Calendar of the Kingdom of Judah", *AUSS* 5 (1967) 12-27; H. S. GEHMAN, "Chronology", *The New Westminster Dictionary of the Bible* (Philadelphia 1970) 162 ff., esp. 167-172; R. K. HARRISON, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (London 1970) 181-192; K. S. FREEDY - D. B. REDFORD, "The Dates in Ezekiel in Relation to Biblical, Babylonian and Egyptian Sources", *JAOS* 90 (1970) 462-485; M. WEIPPERT, *Edom* (Tübingen 1971) 351 ff., 649 ff.; R. GREEN, "The Chronology of the Last Days of Judah: Two Apparent Discrepancies", *JBL* 101 (1982) 57-73.

⁽⁷⁾ E. AUERBACH, "Die babylonische Datierung im Pentateuch und das Alter des Priester-Kodex", *VT* 2 (1952) 334-342, esp. 336; id., "Der Wechsel des Jahres-Anfangs in Juda im Lichte der neugefundenen babylonischen Chronik", *VT* 9 (1959) 113-121, esp. 118; id., "Wann eroberte Nebukadnezar Jerusalem?", *VT* 11 (1961) 128-136.

that Jerusalem was destroyed in 586. We will first examine the positions of the scholars who maintain that the new year fell on 1 Nisan. According to those proposing the earlier date, Zedekiah was crowned in Adar 597, and the first year of his reign began less than a month later, in Nisan 597. The proponents of the later date, on the other hand, are of the opinion that the count of the years of Zedekiah's reign began only after 1 Nisan 597, and that the first year of his reign began on 1 Nisan 596. The approach of the proponents of the earlier date is not reasonable. Such an assumption clearly contradicts the synchronisms between Zedekiah and Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kgs 25,2-8; Jer 52,5-12; 32,1): the tenth year of Zedekiah would be congruent with the seventeenth (and not the eighteenth) year of Nebuchadnezzar, and similarly, the last year of Zedekiah's reign would not begin in the nineteenth, but rather in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. Some of the scholars maintaining this assumption argue that the above-mentioned synchronisms are faulty, and that the testimony of Josephus is to be preferred to them⁽⁸⁾. Others conjecture that to the west of the Euphrates a different reckoning of the years of Nebuchadnezzar was in effect. This count began at the end of the twentieth year of Nabopolassar, from the time that Nebuchadnezzar was put in command of the army⁽⁹⁾. According to this assumption, the synchronisms between Nebuchadnezzar and Zedekiah were calculated according to the count practiced in the west. The chronology of this period, however, cannot be based on the later calculations of Josephus⁽¹⁰⁾. Similarly, it is extremely difficult to assume that in the west the count of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar began about a year before he was crowned⁽¹¹⁾. Nor does the determination of the destruction of the Temple in 587 correspond with the chronological datum in Ezek 33,21 which teaches that the fall of Jerusalem was known to the exiles in Babylonia in the twelfth year of the exile of Jehoiachin: "And it came to pass in the twelfth year of our captivity, in the tenth month, in the fifth day of the month, that one that had escaped out of Jerusalem came unto me, saying, 'The city is smitten'"⁽¹²⁾. Most scholars, including the proponents of the advanced Nisan method, suppose that the count of the exile of Jehoiachin began on 1 Nisan 597. Consequently, according to the proponents of the early date, the refugee informed Ezekiel of the conquest of Jerusalem about seventeen months after the fall of the city, which is a completely unreasonable assumption⁽¹³⁾.

⁽⁸⁾ BEGRICH, *Die Chronologie*, 141 ff.; Josephus established the destruction of Jerusalem in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar (*Antiquities* 10 10:146).

⁽⁹⁾ ALBRIGHT, "The Nebuchadnezzar", 32; FREEDMAN, "The Babylonian Chronicle", 57; NOTH, "Die Einnahme", 155.

⁽¹⁰⁾ For the chronology of Josephus see E. R. THIELE, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (Chicago 1951) 204-227.

⁽¹¹⁾ Cf. HORN, "The Babylonian Chronicle", 23; GREEN, "The Chronology", 61-62.

⁽¹²⁾ Cf. FREEDY-REDFORD, "The Dates", 810. Other scholars prefer the version of the Lucianic recension of the LXX, the Syriac and a few Hebrew MSS ("beašte" instead of "bište"). See MOWINCKEL, "Die Chronologie", 282; G. FOHRER, *Ezekiel* (HAT; Tübingen 1955) 187; ZIMMERLI, *Ezekiel*, 810. Cf. also E. KUTSCH, *Die chronologischen Daten des Ezekielbuches* (Göttingen 1985) 41-45. In his opinion the version of the Masorah should be preferred.

⁽¹³⁾ Cf. E. VOGT, "Bemerkungen über das Jahr der Eroberung Jerusalems", *Bib* 56 (1975) 223-230.

Similar to the approach of the proponents of the early date, the approach maintaining a later date contradicts at least seemingly a number of chronological data: 1) According to 2 Kgs 25,1 (= Jer 52,4), the final siege of Jerusalem began in the ninth year of the reign of Zedekiah, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month. A similar date is given in Ezek 24,1-2: "Again in the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, son of man, write thee the name of the day even of this same day: the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day". If the dates in the Book of Ezekiel are counted according to the exile of Jehoiachin, then the chronological datum in Ezek 24,1-2 contradicts the proponents of a later date, for according to them the ninth year of Zedekiah would begin in the tenth, and not the ninth, year of the exile of Jehoiachin. This difficulty can be resolved if we assume that this date, in contrast with other dates in the Book of Ezekiel, is not reckoned according to the exile of Jehoiachin but rather by the reign of Zedekiah⁽¹⁴⁾. The language of the verse, which is identical with the language of the date cited in 2 Kgs 25,1 (= Jer 52,4), and the uniqueness and importance of the date do provide some basis for the assumption that in this instance the official reckoning of the kingdom of Judah was employed, and not the reckoning of the exile of Jehoiachin. 2) According to the proponents of the later date, the reckoning of the reign of Zedekiah began only after 1 Nisan 597, about a month after the deposition of Jehoiachin. It is difficult, however, to assume that Zedekiah was crowned before 1 Nisan but counted his years only after Jehoiachin's departure from the land of Israel⁽¹⁵⁾; similarly, there is no support for the conjecture that Zedekiah's coronation was postponed by a month⁽¹⁶⁾. To the contrary, it may be assumed that Nebuchadnezzar installed Zedekiah close to the deposition of Jehoiachin, returning afterwards to his land for the new year celebrations⁽¹⁷⁾. The first contradiction, therefore, can be resolved, but no reasonable method has yet been proposed for resolving the second contradiction; accordingly, the view proposing a late Nisan would seem to be impossible⁽¹⁸⁾.

⁽¹⁴⁾ See the commentary of Rashi on Ezekiel. His proposal was adopted by the following scholars: FREEDY – REDFORD, "The Dates", 468; ZIMMERLI, *Ezekiel*, 995; KUTSCH, *Die chronologischen Daten*, 61-63, 70; J.W. WEVERS, *Ezekiel* (NCB; London 1969) 169.

⁽¹⁵⁾ TADMOR, "Chronology (1963)", col. 276.

⁽¹⁶⁾ VOGT, "Bemerkungen", 227.

⁽¹⁷⁾ Cf. E. VOGT, "Die neubabylonische Chronik über die Schlacht bei Karkemish und die Einnahme von Jerusalem", *VTS* 4 (1956) 67-96, esp. 94; NOTH, "Die Einnahme", 152; A. MALAMAT, *Israel in Biblical Times* (Jerusalem 1983) 23 [Hebrew]; GREEN, "The Chronology", 60.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Another chronological datum which is not in accordance with the Nisan reckoning is mentioned in Dan 1,1. Yet no historical or chronological reconstruction should be based on the date mentioned in the first verse of the Book of Daniel. For a similar attitude towards this date see TADMOR, "Chronology (1963)", col. 266; MALAMAT, *Israel*, 256-257; J.E. GOLDINGAY, *Daniel* (WBC; Dallas 1989) 14-15; but cf. M.K. MERCER, "Daniel 1:1 and Jehoiakim's Three Years of Servitude", *AUSS* 27 (1989) 179-192.

The scholars who are of the opinion that the new year fell on 1 Tishri suppose that Jehoiakim was crowned after 1 Tishri 609⁽¹⁹⁾. Malamat raised the alternative possibility that Jehoiakim was crowned before 1 Tishri 609⁽²⁰⁾. Both proposals are difficult. Establishing the coronation of Jehoiakim after 1 Tishri contradicts the chronological datum in Jer 46,2, which indicates that the battle of Carchemish took place in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. If we establish the coronation of Jehoiakim after 1 Tishri 609, then the battle of Carchemish took place in the third year of Jehoiakim. If, on the other hand, we assume that Jehoiakim was crowned before 1 Tishri, this difficulty would be resolved, but as a consequence we would count twelve years, and not eleven, for the reign of Jehoiakim. A number of proposals have been offered to resolve these difficulties. Researchers conjectured that the chronological data in the Book of Jeremiah (which have no parallel in the Book of Kings) count the years of the reign of the kings of Judah from 1 Nisan⁽²¹⁾. According to another argument raised recently, contradictory traditions regarding the coronation of Jehoiakim were prevalent. Some of them established his coronation before 1 Tishri, and according to other traditions he was crowned only after 1 Tishri, while in fact Jehoiakim was crowned close to the new year which fell on 1 Tishri (according to this approach, it is not clear whether the coronation took place before or after 1 Tishri)⁽²²⁾. These forced arguments do not resolve the above-mentioned difficulty, for if we assume that Jehoiakim was crowned before 1 Tishri, this would contradict the count of the years of his reign; if we assume that he was crowned after 1 Tishri, the datum in Jer 46,2 cannot be maintained.

Other scholars have adopted a position integrating the above-mentioned proposals. According to them, during the entire period of the Divided Kingdom, the new year fell in Judah on 1 Tishri (on 1 Heshvan, according to another opinion), while during the reign of Jehoiakim the date of the new year was changed to 1 Nisan. According to this assumption, the fifth "year" of Jehoiakim lasted seventeen months⁽²³⁾ (alternatively, the sixth "year" of Jehoiakim lasted eighteen months)⁽²⁴⁾. From the seventh year of Jehoiakim on, this method is identical to that maintaining Nisan as the new year according to the proponents of the later date. Yet these conjectures also are difficult. There is no supporting evidence for the assumption that the new year in Judah was changed from 1 Tishri or 1 Heshvan to 1 Nisan, and certainly not that this change took place in the time of Jehoiakim⁽²⁵⁾.

⁽¹⁹⁾ THIELE, *The Mysterious Numbers* (1983), 182 ff.; HORN, "The Babylonian Chronicle", 19.

⁽²⁰⁾ MALAMAT, "The Twilight", 127, n. 9; id., *Israel*, 246-247.

⁽²¹⁾ THIELE, *The Mysterious Numbers* (1983), 183 ff.

⁽²²⁾ GREEN, "The Chronology", 71-73.

⁽²³⁾ AUERBACH (see note 7); FINEGAN, *Handbook*, 203.

⁽²⁴⁾ V. PAVLOVSKY - E. VOGT, "Die Jahre der Könige von Juda und Israel", *Bib* 45 (1964) 346.

⁽²⁵⁾ CLINES, "Regnal Year", 33; cf. JEPSEN, "Zur Chronologie", 27-28.

All the scholars assumed that the Babylonian calendar corresponded to the Judahite, and that 2 Adar in the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar — a date undoubtedly given in the Babylonian chronicle according to the Babylonian calendar — fell on 2 Adar according to the calendar of Judah. But it can be positively established that there is no proof for the presumed correspondence between the calendars. To the contrary, since there was no fixed intercalation of years in Babylonia (see below), it is certainly possible that at times the calendars diverged. We shall attempt to show that in the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar the possibility of divergence was more probable than the possibility that the calendars corresponded. This will be followed by a discussion of the implications of this conclusion for a reconstruction of the chronological frame of the events in the last years of the kingdom of Judah.

We shall first discuss our knowledge of the calendars in Babylonia and Judah at the time. It is well known that the Babylonian calendar was lunar-solar, and that in the seventh-sixth centuries BC a fixed system for intercalation had not yet been introduced. Only in a later period, apparently in the fourth century BC, was an intercalation cycle of nineteen years introduced in Babylonia, in which seven fixed years (years 3, 6, 8, 11, 14, 17, 19) were intercalated⁽²⁶⁾. Parker and Dubberstein's research revealed that in the seventh-sixth centuries BC a flexible cycle evolved. In the course of this cycle, nineteen years on the average, between six and eight years were intercalated⁽²⁷⁾. Now, after the publication of a catalogue of more than 35,000 economic documents from the city of Sippar in the collections of the British Museum⁽²⁸⁾, it is clear that most of Parker and Dubberstein's findings are still valid; two points, however, require emendation: 1) Following Goetze, Parker and Dubberstein supposed that the nineteenth year of Nabopolassar was intercalated⁽²⁹⁾. However, in the sole document on which their supposition is based (NCBT 1156), the king's name is not specified. It is more likely that this document is from the time of Kandalanu, the nineteenth year of whose reign was definitely intercalated. 2) It can be established that the first year of Nabopolassar was intercalated (BM 54209). Consequently the number of intercalated years in

⁽²⁶⁾ R. A. PARKER – W. H. DUBBERSTEIN, *Babylonian Chronology, 626 B.C. – A.D. 75* (Providence 1956) 1-9. See also H. HUNGER – E. REINER, "A Scheme for Intercalary Months From Babylonia", *WZKM* 67 (1975) 21-28.

⁽²⁷⁾ PARKER – DUBBERSTEIN, *Babylonian Chronology*, esp. 6, Plate I.

⁽²⁸⁾ E. LEICHTY, *Catalogue of the Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum, VI: Tablets from Sippar 1* (London 1986); id. and A. K. GRAYSON, *Catalogue of the Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum, VII: Tablets from Sippar 2* (London 1987); E. LEICHTY – J. J. FINKELSTEIN – C. B. F. WALKER, *Catalogue of the Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum, VIII: Tablets from Sippar 3* (London 1988); For a list of the Neo-Babylonian and Late-Babylonian tablets published after the publication of Parker and Dubberstein's last edition of their book (1956), see M. A. DANDAMAEV, *Slavery in Babylonia* (DeKalb, IL 1984, rev. ed.) tr. by V. A. Powell; ed. by D. Weisberg, 6-18. The most important addition to Dandamaev's list is the group of about four hundred Late-Babylonian tablets published by McEwan in 1984: G. J. P. MCEWAN, *Late Babylonian Texts in the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford 1984) = *Oxford Editions of Cuneiform Texts X*.

⁽²⁹⁾ PARKER – DUBBERSTEIN, *Babylonian Chronology*, 4, and n. 9 there.

the cycle beginning in 633 was at least six. Therefore, we can establish with a great deal of certainty the years intercalated in Babylonia during that period, as well as the Julian dates of the years in Babylonia from the last third of the seventh century BC on (see the complete listing in the Table).

In contrast with our detailed knowledge regarding the Babylonian calendar, our knowledge of the calendar of Judah is sparse. It may reasonably be assumed, as is accepted in the scholarly literature, that the calendar in Judah was lunar-solar, and that in Judah as well there was some sort of mechanism for adjusting the twelve-month lunar year to the solar one with intercalation cycles averaging nineteen years, as was the practice in Babylonia, or eight year cycles in which three years were intercalated, as was the practice in Greece before the institution of the Metonic cycle in the fifth century BC, or in another manner — for otherwise it would not have been possible to observe the festivals in their proper times⁽³⁰⁾.

We will now turn our attention to the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar. It can be definitely established that this year was intercalated and that the intercalated month was Ululu⁽³¹⁾. Similarly, 2 Adar (in the Babylonian calendar) fell in this year on March 16, 597, and 1 Nisan (in the Babylonian calendar) in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar fell on April 13, 597⁽³²⁾. Is it possible to determine the Julian date on which 1 Nisan in Judah fell in that year? Based on our knowledge of the Babylonian calendar and the calendar of Judah, two main possibilities may be proposed. The first, that 1 Nisan fell, also by the calendar of Judah, on April 13; the other possibility is that 1 Nisan by the calendar of Judah fell about a month before 1 Nisan by the Babylonian calendar, i.e., close to March 15⁽³³⁾. Seemingly, it is not possible to decide in favor of one of these two possibilities. If, however, we prefer the first (i.e., that the two calendars corresponded to each other), we must then assume that Zedekiah was crowned by Nebuchadnezzar close to the surrender of Jehoiachin, but

⁽³⁰⁾ For intercalation in Israel and in Judah in biblical times see J.B. SEGAL, "Intercalation and the Hebrew Calendar", *VT* 7 (1957) 250-307; id., *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, VIII (Jerusalem 1982), 197-209, esp. 204-205, with earlier literature [Hebrew].

⁽³¹⁾ An intercalary Ululu, in the 7th year of Nebuchadnezzar is mentioned in three tablets: 1. J.N. STRASSMAIER, *Inscriptionen von Nabuchodonosor König von Babylon* (Leipzig 1889) no. 61; 2. H.F. LUTZ, *Neo-Babylonian Administrative Documents from Erech* (Berkeley 1927) 84, no. 10 (= id., *Selected Cuneiform Texts* [University of California Publications in Semitic Philology 9; Berkeley 1931]); 3. LEICHTY, *Catalogue*, vol. VI, 14, BM 49685.

⁽³²⁾ PARKER-DUBBERSTEIN, *Babylonian Chronology*, 27. The Julian dates in Parker and Dubberstein's book were established at times on the basis of only one tablet indicating the intercalation of a month in a specific year (and in few cases even the single tablet was not found and they were obliged to propose a tentative suggestion). The publication of a catalogue of more than 35,000 tablets enables us to base each intercalary year at least on two tablets and often on more than three tablets (see Table, pp. 374-375. Forty-four from the forty-seven intercalary years mentioned in this table are established on the basis of more than two tablets).

⁽³³⁾ It is less reasonable to suppose that the Passover in this year was celebrated on May 28th (and that 1 Nisan = May 13). In Babylon (after 609 BC), 1 Nisan never occurs after April 26.

Intercalary Months in Babylon 633-501 BC

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Kn/15 633	Np/12 A 22.4.614	Nk/10 22.4.595	Nk/29 22.4.576	Nr/3 A 23.3.557	Cy/1 24.3.538	Da/3 U 23.3.519
2	Kn/16 632	Np/13 10.5.613	Nk/11 A 12.4.594	Nk/30 12.4.575	Nn/rš 11.4.556	Cy/2 U 12.3.537	Da/4 11.4.518
3	Kn/17 631	Np/14 30.4.612	Nk/12 30.4.593	Nk/31 U 1.4.574	Nn/1 A 31.3.555	Cy/3 U 31.3.536	Da/5 A 30.3.517
4	Kn/18 630	Np/15 U 19.4.611	Nk/13 19.4.592	Nk/32 19.4.573	Nn/2 19.4.554	Cy/4 18.4.535	Da/6 18.4.516
5	Kn/19 U 8.4.629	Np/16 8.5.610	Nk/14 A 8.4.591	Nk/33 A 8.4.572	Nn/3 A 7.4.553	Cy/5 8.4.534	Da/7 8.4.515
6	Kn/20 27.4.628	Np/17 27.4.609	Nk/15 27.4.590	Nk/34 26.4.571	Nn/4 26.4.552	Cy/6 A 28.3.533	Da/8 A 29.3.514
7	Kn/21 16.4.627	Np/18 16.4.608	Nk/16 15.4.589	Nk/35 16.4.570	Nn/5 16.4.551	Cy/7 16.4.532	Da/9 16.4.513
8	Np/rš 5.4.626	Np/19 5.4.607	Nk/17 A 4.4.588	Nk/36 A 4.4.569	Nn/6 A 5.4.550	Cy/8 5.4.531	Da/10 5.4.512
9	Np/1 A 24.3.625	Np/20 A 25.3.606	Nk/18 23.4.587	Nk/37 23.4.568	Nn/7 23.4.549	Ca/rš U 26.3.530	Da/11 U 25.3.511
10	Np/2 A 12.4.624	Nk/rš 12.4.605	Nk/19 13.4.586	Nk/38 13.4.567	Nn/8 13.4.548	Ca/1 12.4.529	Da/12 13.4.510
11	Np/3 1.5.623	Nk/1 2.4.604	Nk/20 2.4.585	Nk/39 2.4.566	Nn/9 2.4.547	Ca/2 1.4.528	Da/13 A 1.4.509

12	Np/4 21.4.622	Nk/2 U 22.3.603	Nk/21 U 22.3.584	Nk/40 22.3.565	Nn/10 U 22.3.546	Ca/3 U 21.3.527	Da/14 20.4.508
13	Np/5 U 9.4.621	Nk/3 10.4.602	Nk/22 10.4.583	Nk/41 U 11.3.564	Nn/11 9.4.545	Ca/4 9.4.526	Da/15 9.4.507
14	Np/6 28.4.620	Nk/4 30.3.601	Nk/23 A 30.3.582	Nk/42 A 29.3.563	Nn/12 A 29.3.544	Ca/5 A 29.3.525	Da/16 A 30.3.506
15	Np/7 A 18.4.619	Nk/5 U 19.3.600	Nk/24 17.4.581	Am/rš 17.4.562	Nn/13 17.4.543	Ca/6 17.4.524	Da/17 17.4.505
16	Np/8 7.5.618	Nk/6 6.4.599	Nk/25 6.4.580	Am/1 6.4.561	Nn/14 6.4.542	Ca/7 7.4.523	Da/18 6.4.504
17	Np/9 25.4.617	Nk/7 U 27.3.598	Nk/26 A 26.3.579	Nr/rš A 26.3.560	Nn/15 A 26.3.541	Da/rš A 27.3.522	Da/19 U 27.3.503
18	Np/10 U 14.4.616	Nk/8 13.4.597	Nk/27 14.4.578	Nr/1 14.4.559	Nn/16 14.4.540	Da/1 14.4.521	Da/20 14.4.502
19	Np/11 3.5.615	Nk/9 U 3.4.596	Nk/28 A 3.4.577	Nr/2 4.4.558	Cy/rš 4.4.539	Da/2 3.4.520	Da/21 2.4.501

1. In each square in the table appear in the upper line (from left to right): the king's name; the year of his reign; and the intercalary month. The date given in the bottom line in each square is that of the first day of Nisan of this year.

2. The following abbreviations are used:

A = Addaru; Am = Amel-Marduk; Nr = Nabopolassar; Cy = Cyrus; Da = Darius I; Kn = Kandalanu; Nk = Nebuchadnezzar; Nn = Nabonaidus; Np = Nabopolassar; Nr = Neriglissar; rš = *šarat rēš šarrūti*; U = Ululu.

3. The abbreviation Ca/rš marks not only Cambyses' accession year but also Cyrus' last year (the 9th), and so Cy/rš marks also Nn/17, and Np/rš = 22 "arki Kandalanu"; Nk/rš = Nk/43; Nr/rš = Am/2; Nn/rš = Nr/4 = the accession year of Labashi-Marduk; Da/rš = Ca/8 = the accession year of Bardiya.

4. The following intercalary months are based only on one source: Np/1, Nk/9, Nk/11. The others are based on two or more sources.

5. In the left column we pointed out the fixed intercalary months in Babylon from the 4th century BC on.

numbered his years only after Jehoiachin's departure from the land of Israel. This is unreasonable. Similarly, the other hypotheses raised to resolve the above difficulty also are extremely difficult. More reasonable is the assumption that Zedekiah counted his years from his coronation, which occurred, according to the Babylonian calendar, at the beginning of the month of Adar, and according to the calendar of Judah, at the beginning of Nisan. This proposal resolves the biblical and external chronological data for the period under discussion and provides an opportunity for the possible reconstruction of the events in the last years of the kingdom of Judah. An outline of the chronological frame of this period according to this proposal is as follows:

1. In the month of Sivan, or, at the latest, the beginning of Tammuz 609 (according to the Babylonian calendar), in the thirty-first year of his reign, Josiah fell in battle at Megiddo⁽³⁴⁾. His sudden death and the hasty departure of Necho from the land left a vacuum, which was well used by the supporters of Jehoahaz, who crowned him in place of his father.

2. About three months later, Jehoahaz was imprisoned in Necho's headquarters in Riblah, and his brother Jehoiakim was crowned in his stead.

3. In the spring/summer of 605, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the Babylonians defeated the Egyptians near Carchemish and conquered the land of Hamath⁽³⁵⁾. On 8 Av 605 Nabopolassar died, in the twenty-first year of his reign. His son Nebuchadnezzar returned to Babylonia and was crowned on 1 Elul 605.

4. In the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian army invaded Palestine. At that time, in the fifth year of Jehoiakim, in the ninth month (Kislev), during which Nebuchadnezzar conquered Ashkelon, a fast was proclaimed in Jerusalem and Jehoiakim summoned an emergency session of his council of ministers in which they possibly discussed surrender to Babylonia (Jer 36,9ff.)⁽³⁶⁾. It is not clear whether Judah surrendered to Babylonia in that year, or only a year later (603)⁽³⁷⁾.

⁽³⁴⁾ BRIGHT, *A History*, 324; MALAMAT, *Israel*, 237-238; Other scholars assume that no battle took place at Megiddo and that Josiah was executed. See A.C. WELCH, "The Death of Josiah", *ZAW* 43 (1925) 255-260; and recently N. NA'AMAN, "The Town-Lists of Judah and Benjamin and the Kingdom of Judah in the Days of Josiah", *Zion* 54 (1989) 63 ff. [Hebrew], with earlier literature. Na'aman's article is full of unreasonable speculations.

⁽³⁵⁾ For the reconstruction "Ha[ma]th" instead of "Hatti" see B. ODED, "When did the Kingdom of Judah Become Subjected to Babylonian Rule?", *Tarbiz* 35 (1966) 104 [Hebrew].

⁽³⁶⁾ For a possible connection between the general fast day and the Babylonian campaign against Ashkelon see MALAMAT, *Israel*, 257; D.J. WISEMAN, *Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon* (Oxford 1985) 23. For a different view see A. BAUMANN, "Urrolle und Fasttag", *ZAW* 53 (1968) 350-373; N. LOHFINK, "Die Gattung der 'Historischen Kurzgeschichte' in den letzten Jahren von Juda in der Zeit des Babylonischen Exils", *ZAW* 90 (1978) 319-347.

⁽³⁷⁾ For the exact date of the Babylonian subjugation of Judah see ALBRIGHT, "The Seal", 89 ff.; ODED, "When Did the Kingdom of Judah", 103 ff.; MALAMAT, "The Twilight", 129 ff.

5. In the winter of 601/600 a battle was waged between the Egyptians and the Babylonians which apparently ended indecisively. It may be assumed that the results of the battle reinforced the assessment in Judah that Babylonian rule in Palestine was drawing to an end, and the decision was taken in Jerusalem to revolt. The Babylonian response was not long in coming. Nebuchadnezzar, who remained in his land in this year (600), sent his troops together with the auxiliary forces mobilized in the neighboring countries, and Jerusalem was besieged (2 Kgs 24,2.10).

6. Jehoiakim died during the siege and his son Jehoiachin was crowned in his stead, on 22 Kislev (according to the presumed calendar of Judah, which corresponded to about 22 Heshvan in the Babylonian calendar)⁽³⁸⁾. Shortly after the coronation of Jehoiachin, in the month of Kislev according to the Babylonian calendar, Nebuchadnezzar set forth from his land at the head of his army and came to Jerusalem (BM 21946, l. 11).

7. Only a few weeks after the arrival of the Babylonian king and his forces in Jerusalem, on 2 Adar, the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar, according to the Babylonian calendar (which, according to the proposed reconstruction, corresponded to 2 Nisan in the calendar of Judah, i.e., the day after the new year), Jerusalem surrendered and opened its gates to Nebuchadnezzar. Jehoiachin was deposed, after reigning for 100 days, and his uncle Zedekiah was crowned in his stead. The time which elapsed from the crowning of Zedekiah in the month of Nisan (according to the presumed calendar of Judah) until the end of the month of Adar 596 is reckoned as the accession year of Zedekiah, while the first year of his reign began on 1 Nisan 596.

8. Jehoiachin, and along with him about 10,000 people, were exiled to Babylonia at the beginning of the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar, which was the first year of the exile of Jehoiachin (2 Kgs 24,12)⁽³⁹⁾. This exile is to

⁽³⁸⁾ For the death of Jehoiakim see HORN, "The Babylonian Chronicle", 27; MALAMAT, *Israel*, 262; A. R. GREEN, "The Fate of Jehoiakim", *AUSS* 20 (1982) 103-109.

⁽³⁹⁾ This assumption, which is accepted by most scholars, contradicts the chronological datum brought in the end of Book of Kings regarding the release of Jehoiachin from the Babylonian prison in the thirty-seventh year of his exile, on the 25th/27th day of the twelfth month, in the accession year of Amel-Marduk. It can be established that the accession year of Amel-Marduk began before 5 Tammuz 562 (= July 19, 562 – BM 65270), and lasted about nine months, until the end of Adar 561. Jehoiachin was released from his imprisonment on 25/27 Adar 561 (= April 1-3, 561). If the count of the exile of Jehoiachin began on 1 Nisan 597, then his release is to be reckoned in the thirty-sixth year of the exile of Jehoiachin, only a few days before the beginning of the thirty-seventh year of his exile. Perhaps this proximity of dates was intended by the author. ALBRIGHT, "The Seal", 101 f., interpreted "*bishnat molcho*" as referring to the first year of his reign. For a similar view see FINEGAN, *Handbook*, 209-210; JEPSEN, "Zur Chronologie", 21-23; ANDERSEN, "Die Chronologie", 110. This proposal, however, is not reasonable, and it cannot be assumed that Jehoiachin was released at the end of the first year of Amel-Marduk, i.e., more than twenty months after his coronation. To the contrary, it may reasonably be supposed that Amel-Marduk, like many kings in the ancient Near East, released Jehoiachin within the context of a *durāru* he probably proclaimed close to his coronation. For the *durāru* see the recent work of M. WEINFELD, *Justice and Righteousness in Israel*

be distinguished from that of the 3023 Judahites in the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar (Jer 52,29)⁽⁴⁰⁾.

9. On 10 Tevet 587, in the ninth year of Zedekiah, which was the seventeenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, the final siege of Jerusalem began (2 Kgs 25,1; Jer 52,4; Ezek 24,1-2). During the course of the siege, the Egyptian army moved north to the aid of Judah; the Babylonians were forced to lift the siege and concentrate their army for the decisive battle against the Egyptians (Jer 37,5). The Egyptian army retreated, however, and the Babylonians renewed the siege of Jerusalem.

10. On 9 Tammuz 586, after eighteen months of siege, the walls of the city were breached (Jer 39,2), and about a month later, on 7 or 10 Av 586, Nebuzaradan destroyed the Temple and burnt Jerusalem (2 Kgs 25,8-9ff.).

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and the Nations (Jerusalem 1985) [Hebrew] 45 ff., 84 ff. Furthermore, we now possess many economic documents likely to testify to the coregency of Amel-Marduk and Nebuchadnezzar, showing that the release of Jehoiachin took place a relatively short time after Amel-Marduk was installed as sole ruler (see R. H. SACK, *Amel-Marduk: 562-560 B.C.* [Neukirchen-Vluyn 1972] no. 56, 70, 79, as well as documents BM 65270, 66846, 75322 mentioned in the catalogue published by Leichty (see note 28, above). A new document (BM 5386 = CT 55 138), from the month of Tevet, the forty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylonia, could indicate that Nebuchadnezzar died only in January or February 561. KUTSCH, *Die chronologischen*, 55-59, is of the opinion that Jehoiachin was released from imprisonment in the thirty-seventh year of his exile, which fell in the year of the reign of Amel-Marduk. He advances the exile of Jehoiachin and the beginning of the count of his exile to the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar. But Kutsch's method is not reasonable. It clearly contradicts no less than four biblical chronological data. In his opinion: the first year of Nebuchadnezzar is not the fourth year of Jehoiakim (in opposition to Jer 25,1); the exile of Jehoiachin did not occur in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar (in opposition to 2 Kgs 24,12); the tenth year of Zedekiah is not the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, and the eleventh year of Zedekiah is not the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar (in opposition to Jer 32,1; 52,5-12; 2 Kgs 25,2-8). See KUTSCH, "Das Jahr", 542, 545; id., *Die chronologischen*, 30 ff., 74.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ TADMOR, "Chronology (1963)", 275-276; MALAMAT, *Israel*, 263 ff.; VOGT, "Bemerkungen", 225. For different views towards this problem see E. R. THIELE, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids 1965) 161 ff.; WEIPPERT, *Edom*, 365; HORN, "The Babylonian Chronicle", 23; GREEN, "The Chronology", 62; S. TALMON, "Divergences in Calendar Reckoning in Ephraim and Judah", *VT* 8 (1958) 64-65.

Puns upon Names as a Literary Device in 1 Kings 1-2

Punning is a common technique employed at various linguistic levels: in private conversation, in political debate, in newspapers and in both ancient and modern literatures⁽¹⁾. The evaluation of this device has undergone vicissitudes. In the past it was poorly regarded by many scholars, some considering it as the lowest form of wit, others as an obstacle distracting the reader's attention from the content and meaning of a literary unit to its sound. In many workshops of creative writing students were instructed to avoid ambiguity and wordplay.

In the last fifty years there has occurred a gradual change of attitude towards this phenomenon in its various forms. Empson worked on a classification and evaluation of different types of ambiguity⁽²⁾, and others examined different kinds of puns and discussed their contribution to specific literary units⁽³⁾.

Recently, with developments in the field of semiotics and the appearance of new trends in criticism — structuralism, poststructuralism and deconstruction — a radical change has taken place towards regarding the text as a network of signifiers, and similarity in sound between different signifiers as a motivator which draws them together. The role of punning in the working of language and the molding of literary discourse is discussed from various points of view in a collection of articles edited by Jonathan Culler⁽⁴⁾ which contains papers read at a conference held at Cornell University (as well as other later contributions). Punning is regarded by some of these scholars as both a conscious and also an unconscious crystallizing process which shapes the literary text and has a great impact even upon its meaning; hence full legitimization is also given to unconscious puns and to subtle puns that are not distinguishable as such at first glance, such as anagrams (based upon chiasmic or reversed readings), or compound puns constructed upon two derivations from one signifier which are incorporated into two adjacent signifiers, or puns formed upon a transition from one language to another⁽⁵⁾.

⁽¹⁾ For a collection of puns and different approaches and evaluations of this phenomenon, see W. REDFERN, *Puns* (Oxford-New York 1984).

⁽²⁾ See W. EMPSON, *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (Cleveland 1955).

⁽³⁾ See J. BROWN, "Eight Types of Puns", *PMLA* 71 (1956) 14-26; L.G. HELLER, "Toward a General Typology of the Pun", *Linguistic Perspectives on Literature* (ed. M.K.L. CHING et al.) (London 1980) 305-318.

⁽⁴⁾ J. CULLER (ed.), *On Puns: The Foundation of Letters* (Oxford-New York 1988).

⁽⁵⁾ See CULLER, *On Puns*, 1-15, 17-31; A. AHL, *Metaformations: Soundplay and Wordplay in Ovid and Other Classical Poets* (Oxford 1985) 17-63.

Special consideration should be granted to puns upon names, because of the significant role names play in literary texts. Indeed, there are several studies which focus on the employment of this device in classical⁽⁶⁾ as well modern literatures⁽⁷⁾.

The Sages used a somewhat similar technique in regard to biblical names, which they called *מדרש שמות* (freely translated as midrashic name derivations)⁽⁸⁾, a term which has been adopted by some modern scholars. This wide ranging and multifarious phenomenon in the Bible has only recently received a limited scientific treatment by Zakovitch⁽⁹⁾ and Strus⁽¹⁰⁾, and a fuller discussion, including a classification and definitions, with examples of various types and sub-types, in my own books⁽¹¹⁾. It is well recognized by these scholars and others that puns upon names may sometimes serve as a dominant device in shaping the text of a specific biblical unit⁽¹²⁾. Such is the case in the story of Solomon's accession to the throne in 1 Kings 1–2, which we shall now discuss in detail.

(a) The dispute between Solomon and Adonijah as to who will succeed to David's throne reaches its crucial stage when Adonijah invites his supporters to En-rogel for a feast, in the course of which he is to be declared the new king. The feast is accompanied by the slaughter of sheep, oxen and fat cattle, and (of course) eating and drinking (1.9.19.25.41). Activity of this type is implied in the name of Adonijah's mother, Haggith (*חגי*), which is derived from *חג* (root *חגג*) and denotes a celebration — eating and drinking on a special occasion (cf., e.g., 1 Sam 30,16; Exod 32,6). Although the author does not employ the word *חג* or *חגג* explicitly, one should not rule out the validity of such implicit puns, since many subtle instances of this kind are to be found elsewhere in the Bible⁽¹³⁾.

⁽⁶⁾ See E. S. MCCARTNEY, "Puns and Plays on Proper Names", *The Classical Journal* 14 (1919) 343-358; C. J. FORDYCE, "Puns on Names in Greek", *The Classical Journal* 27 (1932) 44-46.

⁽⁷⁾ See H. THIES, *Namen im Kontext von Dramen: Studien zur Funktion von Personennamen im englischen, amerikanischen und deutschen Drama* (Sprache und Literatur 13; Frankfurt am Main 1978); D. LAMPING, *Der Name in der Erzählung: Zur Poetik des Eigennamens* (Bonn 1983); for more bibliography, consult E. M. RAJEC, *The Study of Names in Literature: A Bibliography* (New York 1978); idem, *The Study of Names in Literature: A Bibliography, Supplement* (New York 1981).

⁽⁸⁾ See D. M. HARDUF, *A Collection of Biblical Names and their Midrashic Derivations* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv 1964).

⁽⁹⁾ Y. ZAKOVITCH, *Duplicated Midrashic Name Derivations* [Hebrew]. M.A. Thesis, The Hebrew University (Jerusalem 1972).

⁽¹⁰⁾ A. STRUS, *Nomen-Omen: La stylistique sonore des noms propres dans le Pentateuque* (AnBib 80; Rome 1978).

⁽¹¹⁾ M. GARSIEL, *Midrashic Name Derivations in the Bible* [Hebrew] (Ramat Gan 1987); idem, *Biblical Names: A Literary Study of Midrashic Derivations and Puns* [a revised and enlarged English translation of the above Hebrew edition] (Ramat Gan 1991).

⁽¹²⁾ See, e.g., M. GARSIEL, "Midrashic Name Derivations in Elijah and Elisha's Stories" [Hebrew], *Gevaryahu Jubilee Volume* (ed. B. Z. LURIEH) (Jerusalem 1989) 149-155.

⁽¹³⁾ For various types of implicit puns, see ZAKOVITCH, *Duplicated Midrashic Name Derivations*, 25-57; GARSIEL, *Midrashic Name Derivations*, Chapters 3-4.

(b) On the other side, Bath-sheba's plea to the king to intervene in favor of Solomon and against the unilateral action taken by Adonijah is based upon the commitment David has taken upon himself in swearing to her that her son, Solomon, will succeed him on his throne (1 Kings 1,13.17)⁽¹⁴⁾. King David responds by reaffirming his old oath and swearing a new one to Bath-sheba that he will act immediately to ensure Solomon's succession (vv.29-30). This oath is in fact implied in Bath-sheba's name (בַּת-שֶׁבַע), the second component of which may be punningly derived from *šb'* (to swear) and *šbw'h* (oath)⁽¹⁵⁾. It is noteworthy that similar midrashic derivations are explicitly employed in regard to the similar names of Beer-sheba (cf. Gen 21,31; 26,30-33) and Jehosheba, the daughter of King Joram (2 Kgs 11,1-4)⁽¹⁶⁾. Later on, it is Adonijah who asks for an oath from King Solomon that his life will be spared. Solomon responds favorably, stipulating that Adonijah should maintain good conduct (1 Kgs 1,51-52). When Adonijah fails to do so and asks Bath-sheba to speak to King Solomon on his behalf for permission to marry Abishag the Shunammite, the king reprimands his mother's naïveté and swears that Adonijah will pay with his life for this subversive intention (2,23-24). Once again Bath-sheba, whose name implies "oath", evokes an oath from the king — this time without intention — which brings upon Adonijah his final destruction. The punning derivations implied in the names of the two rivals' mothers correspond to the different tactics used by the two parties in their struggle for the throne.

(c) The antagonist in this story is Adonijah (אֲדֹנִיָּהּ), whose name contains the component אֲדֹנָי ('*dn* — lord, master). The reader may receive the impression that it is he who will be the next "lord", the successor; but ironically the narrator never attributes this title to him even though he employs it in our story twenty times⁽¹⁷⁾ — on nineteen occasions ascribing it to David, and on one to King Solomon. Adonijah indeed is very eager to be the '*dn*, the lord, but it is King David who still bears this title; and once he decides to exercise his prerogative to choose his successor, there is no way that Adonijah can stop him. It is the rival brother, Solomon, who is eventually appointed by David to be "lord" — king.

(d) The most prominent figure in Adonijah's faction is Joab son of Zeruiah, the chief commander of the royal army. The books of Samuel and Kings are very critical of Joab and his brother Abishai, denouncing and defining them in unfavorable terms time and again⁽¹⁸⁾. The names of both mother (צִרְיָה — Zeruiah) and son (יֹאב — Joab) contain negative

⁽¹⁴⁾ The historical question — whether indeed King David made a vow in favor of Solomon's accession or whether in his old age he came to believe in a fictional vow — is irrelevant in a literary study. For a discussion and literature on the historical validity of such a vow, see M. GARSIEL, *The Kingdom of David* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv 1975) 158-160.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Cf. ZAKOVITCH, *Duplicated Midrashic Name Derivations*, 212.

⁽¹⁶⁾ For a discussion, see GARSIEL, *Midrashic Name Derivations*, 127-128 (or the English edition, section 5.2.2[7]).

⁽¹⁷⁾ A comparable frequency is to be found only in the story of Rebecca's betrothal (Gen 24).

⁽¹⁸⁾ Cf. 2 Sam 3,34.39; 19,23; 1 Kgs 2,5-6.31-33.

implications. (1) The mother's name evokes associations with **צַר** (adversary, foe), **צָרָה** (straits, distress) and **צָרָר** (to be hostile toward, treat with enmity, vex). This implied pun may resolve the problem as to why the biblical texts offer the mother's name rather than the father's, as is customary in the Bible⁽¹⁹⁾. For similar names that attracted similar punning derivations, compare the names of Zur (**זֶרֶר** Num 25,15-18) and Helkath-hazzurim (**חֶלְקֶת הַצּוּרִים** 2 Sam 2,16). (2) The name "Joab" is an anagram of **אֹיֵב** (enemy, foe)⁽²⁰⁾. It is noteworthy that the two terms, **צָרָר** and **אֹיֵב** (or **צָר** and **אֹיֵב**), are synonyms which are employed as a common word-pair in the Bible⁽²¹⁾. (It is also noteworthy that a similar pun is ironically deployed in regard to the name of Job⁽²²⁾.) These associations underpin the character of Joab, as depicted in 1 Kings 1-2 (as well as in the book of Samuel), and help to create an atmosphere which justifies David's last will and the execution of "Joab son of Zeruiah" (2,5-6.25-34).

(e) The feast of Adonijah's faction ends with the appearance of Jonathan (**יִזְחָן**) the son of Abiathar, who brings in detailed and disastrous news about David's decision and the anointing of King Solomon (1,42-48). Jonathan, whose name contains the verb **נָתַן** (to give, put, set up), concludes his long report by citing David's blessing: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who has given (**נָתַן**) one to sit on my throne..." (v.48). The narrator sets up a correlation between the name of the news-bearer, as stated at the beginning of the scene, and the pun upon it at the end, which creates an ironical *inclusio*⁽²³⁾.

(f) The second round of the struggle between King Solomon and his rival brother, Adonijah, starts when the latter persuades the king's mother, Bath-sheba, to solicit Solomon to allow him to marry Abishag the Shunammite. The real status of Abishag in this story is somewhat obscure. She was not brought to the palace as a concubine, but she might have been regarded as such by the public, since she slept in David's bed and stayed alone with him in his chamber (1,1-4.15). Adonijah's request is considered by King Solomon an act of rebellion⁽²⁴⁾ and he orders his execution.

Abishag's special status may well be implied in her name, **אֲבִישָׁג**, which contains the potential combination of two punning components (in chiasmic order): **שָׁנַל אֲבִי** (my father's concubine⁽²⁵⁾). The last letter (*l*) of the first word is missing; however, according to the most important versions of the Septuagint, it is provided as a prefix to the following word in 2,22, where King Solomon reprimands his mother for her solicitation on behalf of his brother: "And why do you ask Abishag for Adonijah (**אֲבִישָׁג לְאֲדֹנִיָּהוּ**)? Ask

⁽¹⁹⁾ See, e.g., H. P. SMITH, *The Books of Samuel* (ICC; Edinburgh 1899) 231, who suggests that Joab's mother is mentioned since his father was a foreigner.

⁽²⁰⁾ For an etymology based on an anagram, cf. 1 Chr 4,9-10.

⁽²¹⁾ Cf., e.g., Exod 23,22; Lam 4,12; Esth 7,6.

⁽²²⁾ For the anagrammatic pun upon Job's name, see Job 13,24; 33,10; 19,11; cf. tractate *Baba Bathra* p.16; E. M. GOOD, *Irony in the Old Testament* (Philadelphia 1965) 230; ZAKOVITCH, *Duplicated Midrashic Name Derivations*, 81.

⁽²³⁾ The verb *ntn* (to give) also puns upon Nathan's name, which is mentioned in this scene (v.44); cf. J. P. FOKKELMAN, *Narrative Art and Poetry in the Books of Samuel*, vol. 1, *King David* (Assen 1981) 376.

⁽²⁴⁾ Cf. 2 Sam 3,6-11; 16,20-23.

⁽²⁵⁾ For *shegal*, cf. Ps 45,10; Neh 2,6.

for him the kingdom also...". This version is very interesting since of all instances only here is the attributive "the Shunammite" omitted, opening up the possibility of adopting the missing *l* from before Adonijah's name and appending it to the end of Abishag's.

The local attributive of "the Shunammite" (השנמית — from the city of Shunem) contains strong sound associations with the words שנה (sleeping) and נמת (you slumbered — 2nd person, feminine). The verbs ישן (to sleep) and נם (to slumber) serve as a common word-pair in the Bible (cf., e.g., Ps 121,4; Isa 5,27). These punning derivations correspond to the purpose for which the Shunammite girl was brought to the palace — to sleep in the king's bosom and to warm him (1,2).

As noted above, according to the dominant versions of the Septuagint, only once in 2,22 is this local attributive omitted, thus clearing the way to add the missing *l* to her name. Why do these changes take place only here, on the last occasion that Abishag is mentioned in our episode? It may be accidental, but one might also suggest that the omission, on the one hand, of the attributive which hints at her function of sleeping beside the king to warm him, and the completion, on the other hand, of the sound of her title as a concubine (through adding the missing *l*), imply a change in her status. While in reality she was not a concubine in the full sense, inasmuch as her relations with the king were not sexual, in Solomon's eyes Adonijah is endeavoring to treat her as a true concubine in order to give weight to his renewed attempt to gain the throne. This final implication as to her status, therefore, offers Solomon's point of view; or to be more exact, his view of the cunning intention behind Adonijah's request to marry her.

(g) Benaiah (בניהו) the son of Jehoiada (יהודע) is a key figure in this story: he serves as Solomon's main supporter, he secures his anointment, and he carries out the executions of the rivals of both the old and the young king. It may be suggested that the names of both father and son contain associations with the common word pair of בין (to perceive, understand) and ידע (to know; be aware of)⁽²⁶⁾. For this word-pair, cf. Isa 1,3; 44,18⁽²⁷⁾.

Let us take a close look at the various functions of the verb ידע in this story. Several of its recurrences are incorporated into descriptions of David's failures to function as an individual and as a king. It is said that the beautiful Abishag is brought to the king, "but the king did not know her (ידעה)" (1 Kgs 1,4). This statement establishes her status as a servant rather than a concubine, but at the same time it also attests to the king's physical condition, namely his sexual impotence. This is followed by a description of how David fails to reprimand Adonijah for his pretensions; he has never asked him, "Why (מדוע) have you acted this way?" (v. 6). Here too David's failure is expressed in terms of the verb ידע; he does not bother to "know" what is behind his son's behavior. The result is that he is totally unaware of

⁽²⁶⁾ Cf. D. S. SHAPIRO, *Orachim* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem 1977) 151.

⁽²⁷⁾ For further discussion regarding this common word-pair, see Y. AVISHUR, *Stylistic Studies of Word Pairs in Biblical and Ancient Semitic Literatures* (AOAT 210; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1984) 366-367.

Adonijah's final act towards seizing the throne. Twice again his unawareness is expressed in terms of the verb **ידע** (vv. 11.18). Nathan also reproaches the king for not consulting his advisers about his successor: "Can this decision have come from my lord the king, without your making known to (**הודעת**) your servant who is to succeed to the throne of my lord the king?" (v. 27).

Adonijah, who has failed in his first attempt to succeed King David, makes another attempt by using Bath-sheba as a mediator to get Solomon's permission to marry Abishag. He opens his plea with these words: "You know (**ידעת**) that the kingdom was rightly mine..." (2,15). Adonijah has to pay with his life for this request and his executioner is Benaiah son of Jehoiada (v. 25), whose father's name contains the verb **ידע**. Adonijah, who has exploited the unawareness of Solomon's father and mother rather well, fails to do so when his plea comes before King Solomon himself.

The same pun emerges in connection with the execution of Adonijah's main supporter, Joab son of Zeruiah, in an act regarded by King Solomon as retribution for Joab's murder of Abner and Amasa: "...because, unbeknown (**לא ידע**) to my father, he [Joab] struck down with the sword two men..." (v. 32). The execution is a fulfillment of that part of his father's will which pertains to Joab, which opens with the same verb: "Further, you know (**ידעת**) what Joab son of Zeruiah did to me..." (v. 5). Joab's exploitation of David's unawareness and his murder of two leading commanders are recompensed by Solomon's awareness. Having been ordered in the will to handle Joab's punishment "wisely", he chooses Benaiah son of Jehoiada (whose name is in this context so meaningful) to carry out the execution (vv. 29-34).

A similar pattern may be seen in Shimei's execution. The section in David's will about Shimei contains a significant instruction to King Solomon: "So do not let him go unpunished; for you are a wise man and you will know (**ידעת**) how to deal with him..." (v. 9); and indeed Solomon knows how to trick Shimei to his death. He orders him to stay in Jerusalem and warns him, "On the very day that you go out and cross the Wadi Kidron, you shall know for certain (**ידע תדע**) that you shall surely die..." (v. 37). When Shimei violates his oath, King Solomon reprimands him with an extensive use — five times over — of the verb **ידע** (vv. 42-44), and once again he orders no other than Benaiah son of Jehoiada to execute him. In these three executions the biblical principle of retribution known as "measure for measure" is applied through a pun upon the name of the executioner's father.

(h) The section in David's will relating to Shimei incorporates a pun upon the name of the river Jordan (**ירדן**), which is glossed here in terms of **ירד** (to descend). David explains why he has granted an amnesty to Shimei: "but he [Shimei] came down (**ירד**) to meet me at the Jordan, and I swore to him by the Lord, I will not put you to the sword" (v. 8). This is a common pun upon the river's name⁽²⁸⁾, but it becomes subtler in the adjacent verse:

⁽²⁸⁾ Cf. GARSIEL, *Midrashic Name Derivations*, 109 (English edition, section 5.1.1[1]).

"So do not let him go unpunished; for you are a wise man and you will know how to deal with him and send down (תורדת) his gray hair to Sheol in blood" (v. 9).

(i) The name of Shimei (שמעי) offers a potential punning derivation from שמע (to hear) which is exploited when Solomon reproaches Shimei with the reminder that he has been ordered to remain in Jerusalem, and that he has explicitly consented to this: "and you said to me, The word that I have heard (שמעתי) is good" (v. 42). Ironically Shimei fails to keep the oath he has taken upon himself and which is also implied in his name, and by this violation he gives the king a pretext for ordering his execution.

(j) A pun upon a name is also incorporated in the story of the punishment of the last of the rivals, Abiathar the priest, who is ordered to leave Jerusalem and stay on his land at Anathoth. This place-name is exploited for a pun in Solomon's command: "Go to your estate at Anathoth (ענתות)! You deserve to die, but I shall not put you to death at this time, because you carried the Ark of my Lord God before my father David and because you have been afflicted (התענית) in all wherein my father was afflicted (התענה)" (v. 26). (For a similar punning derivation, cf. Isa 10,30.) The reader should not miss the irony: Solomon, indeed, spares the priest's life out of respect for his faithful services to his father in the past, but he nevertheless sends him to Anathoth, which bears a connotation of suffering. This means that Abiathar is doomed to suffer the rest of his life.

(k) In several instances King Solomon's name, שלמה, is derived from שלום (peace)⁽²⁹⁾. In this story this derivation serves as a leitmotif. Adonijah's request of Bath-sheba to help him marry Abishag opens with a declaration of "peace" (2,13-14) that later on turns out to be a well-hidden conspiracy. In David's will Joab is charged with having killed Abner and Amasa, "shedding blood of war in [time of] peace (בשלום)" (2,5). This contains a strong allusion to the descriptions of Joab's murders, which are denounced by the narrator, who takes pains to stress ironically in these texts the word "peace" several times (cf. 2 Sam 3,21-23; 20,9)⁽³⁰⁾. David instructs his son — in a "measure for measure" pattern — to "see that his [Joab's] gray hair does not go down to Sheol in peace (בשלום)" (2,6). Solomon, whose name contains the word "peace", orders his father's will to be carried out, and justifies Joab's execution as a punishment for his murders, sealing his command with these words: "... But upon David, and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace (שלום) for ever from the Lord" (2,33).

Our study attempts to show that the names in this plot should not be regarded as arbitrary signs, accidental and meaningless signifiers that designate only their owners, but that the opposite is the case: many of them contain a potential for connotative derivations which are pertinent to the plot. Indeed, the imaginative author makes use of them in a most

⁽²⁹⁾ Cf. 1 Kgs 5,4,26; 2 Chr 22,9; for a discussion, see GARSIEL, *Midrashic Name Derivations*, 124-125, 134 (English edition, sections 5.2.2[5]; 5.3.1[2]).

⁽³⁰⁾ See S. ZALEWSKI, *Solomon's Ascension to the Throne: Studies in the Books of Kings and Chronicles* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem 1981) 98-102.

impressive way. There is no escape from the conclusion that punning upon names in this biblical story (as well as in many others) functions as a significant literary device to enrich and intensify the plot through a correspondence between names and themes.

This correspondence does not necessarily mean that the names in this and other biblical stories should be regarded as “charactonyms”, that is to say, as symbolic names invented for the purpose of punning, since among the puns one finds many that pertain to known place names like Anathoth or Jordan, or personal names that are well attested elsewhere in the Bible. On the other hand, it is also highly improbable that the author should have invented the story, or most of it, only in order to make use of the puns inherent in the historical names. We suggest that one should adopt the explanation that this phenomenon is, in most instances, an outcome of a punning technique widely used by the biblical authors, who had the artistry to fit the connotative senses of names into the stories⁽³¹⁾.

By creating a correspondence between names and plot materials, the biblical author evokes an atmosphere of order and coherence which occasions a sense of predestination — as if everything had been planned beforehand by the Lord and was explicitly or implicitly fitted into the names of characters and places; and the later historical events indeed move and develop along the lines of this plan.

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⁽³¹⁾ For a full discussion of the various hypothetical explanations of how the puns upon names in the Bible came into being, see GARSIEL, *Midrashic Name Derivations*, Chapter 7.

Rhetorical Achievement in the Hebrews 10 ‘Misquote’ of Psalm 40

The author of the NT book of Hebrews structures his epistle on citations of four Psalms (Pss 8,4-6; 95,7-11; 110,4; 40,6-8)⁽¹⁾. In Heb 10,5-7, a Greek translation of Ps 40,7-9⁽²⁾ is quoted but with four minor changes to the wording of those verses compared to the extant Greek texts of the OT. When trying to understand how the author of Hebrews was using this OT passage, these variations raise several questions. Were these minor variations already present in the Greek *Vorlage* used by the author of Hebrews? Could these variations even attest to a Hebrew text which varies from the Masoretic? Or did the author of Hebrews introduce these variations for a particular reason? Do they contribute to the author's purpose in Hebrews 10? Or are these variations from the LXX rendering a merely incidental lapse of the author's memory?

The passage being discussed reads as follows in the English (*NIV*) translation, starting at Heb 10,5⁽³⁾:

Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said:

“Sacrifice and offering you did not desire,
but a body you prepared for me;
with burnt offerings and sin offerings
you were not pleased.
Then I said, ‘Here I am — it is written
about me in the scroll —
I have come to do your will, O God’”.

When the Masoretic (MT), Rahlfs' Septuagint (LXX) and the Heb 10 texts of Ps 40,7-9 are placed side by side, comparisons of the text can be readily made. See Chart, p. 395.

The LXX translates the MT of Ps 40 very closely. The only variations between the Greek and Hebrew texts are the use of the verb *κατηρτίσω* (“you prepared”) to translate *kārītā* (“you dug”) and the phrase *ἐν μέσῳ τῆς κοιλίας μου* (“in the middle of my belly”) to translate *bētōke mē'āy*. These lexical choices appear to be what one would expect of a close but

(1) S. KISTEMAKER, *The Psalm Citations in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Amsterdam 1961) 130.

(2) According to the *NIV* versification the verses are 6-8.

(3) All Scripture is quoted from the *NIV* unless otherwise noted.

transcultural translation. The translator does not seem to be attempting to introduce semantic variance into the translation.

However, when Ps 40 is quoted in Heb 10 the four variations do introduce, at least formally, a semantic difference: 1) σῶμα ("body") is found in v.5c instead of ὠτία ("ears"); 2) ὀλοκαυτώματα ("burnt offerings", plural) is substituted in v.6 for the singular form ὀλοκαύτωμα in the LXX; 3) εὐδόκησας ("you were pleased") is substituted for ἤτησας ("you demanded") in v.6; 4) ὁ θεός and τὸ θελημα σου are transposed in v.7c and the remainder of the verse as it appears in the LXX is omitted. This final omission in v.7 makes the infinitive ποιῆσαι the purpose for the coming ("I have come to do...") in contrast to its function in the LXX as the object of ἐβουλήθην ("I desire to do...").

Although Rahlfs' LXX text of Ps 40 reads ὠτία ("ears") in v.7b, all extant Greek manuscripts, the oldest of which is Sinaiticus (4th century AD), attest σῶμα ("body") instead. Rahlfs' choice of ὠτία is a retroversion based on the evidence of the MT and the Gallican Psalter.

In *Étude sur la LXX Origénienne du Psautier*, M. Caloz offers two hypotheses to account for this discrepancy⁽⁴⁾: 1) the Greek translator used ὠτία to translate 'oznayim, but at an early date ὠτία was corrupted to σῶμα, 2) σῶμα was the original translation of 'oznayim. Caloz finds it difficult to decide definitively between the two, but finds the first hypothesis the most reasonable.

However, for the purpose of understanding the use of Ps 40 in Heb 10, the question is whether or not σῶμα was the reading of Ps 40 in the Greek translation used by the author of Hebrews in the first century. Most commentators believe that Heb 10,5-7 reflects its author's dependence on a Greek translation of Ps 40 which already contained σῶμα. This opinion was held by J. Calvin ("The apostle followed the Greek translators when he said..."), J. Moffat ("Our author found σῶμα in his LXX text and seized upon it;"), H. Attridge ("In the citation of Ps 40(39),7-9 dependence on the LXX is quite clear".) and C. Spicq (the author of Hebrews uses "Ps 40, cité avec de légères variantes d'après les Septante").⁽⁵⁾

In this paper I argue based on principles of first-century rhetoric that all four of the variations found in Heb 10 were intentionally introduced by the author of Hebrews and were not already in the Greek translation of the OT in the first century. If this is true, the appearance of σῶμα in Ps 40,7 in all extant Greek manuscripts implies that Christian scribes 'corrected' the text of Ps 40 in subsequent manuscripts to agree with its quotation by the author of Hebrews.

⁽⁴⁾ M. CALOZ, *Étude sur la LXX Origénienne du Psautier* (Göttingen 1978) 383.

⁽⁵⁾ J. CALVIN, *Commentaries on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids) 227; J. MOFFATT, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (ICC; New York 1924) 138; H. ATTRIDGE, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Philadelphia 1989) 274; C. SPICQ, *L'Épître aux Hébreux* (Paris 1977) 165.

Commentators who believe these variations were present in the first-century Greek text of Ps 40 must explain them as either the original translation of the Hebrew or the result of scribal error during the transmission of the Greek OT text. Some would suggest that these differences are evidence of variant Hebrew exemplars from which the Greek translation was made⁽⁶⁾.

When explanations of NT 'misquotes' of the OT are first attempted from this perspective, two questionable methodological assumptions are introduced. Firstly, it is assumed that the variations in a given citation have no relationship to one another because presumably they were introduced independently at various times and in various ways. Each variation in the quotation is most often examined independently of any others. This means that if two or more variations are functionally related to each other their relationship, and its possible semantic significance, will be overlooked.

Secondly, assuming that the variations were already in the first-century Greek text of the OT implies that the NT author did not introduce the variations, but was merely quoting the Greek text at hand. Attributing variations in OT citations to translation or transmission errors of the Greek OT further implies that the NT author used an 'erroneous' text of the OT. Consequently, commentators attempt to absolve the NT author by emptying the variation from the Hebrew text of any semantic difference. By using the 'original' Hebrew reading as the standard, a text critical approach to 'misquotes' of the OT implies that the NT author should have used, or would have used were it available to him, the original, and hence superior, OT reading. This assumption pressures the interpreter to make the meaning of the quotation in the NT conform to the meaning of the Hebrew text in its original context as intended by the OT author. Legitimate interpretation of the NT use of the OT citation proceeds only after it has been demonstrated that the variations are not semantically significant and, therefore, that the NT author is not misusing the OT text by violating the original purposes and intentions of the OT author. This pressure is evident in Moffatt's attempt to justify the apostle's use in Heb 10 of what he considers to be an erroneous Greek mistranslation of Ps 40: "Though the LXX mistranslated the psalm, however, it did not alter its general sense. The Greek text meant practically what the original had meant, and it made this interpretation or application [by the author of Hebrews] possible, ..." (7).

These methodological assumptions have precluded interpreters from considering that the four variations in the Ps 40 citation in Heb 10 are the intentional and creative rhetorical product of the author.

Even when a variation in an OT citation is thought to be introduced by the NT author himself, the assumption is often made that the NT author must intend the citation to mean, in its new context, exactly what the original OT text meant in its original context. Consequently, an attempt is

(6) For instance, S. L. JOHNSON, *The Old Testament in the New: An Argument for Biblical Inspiration* (Grand Rapids 1980) 62.

(7) MOFFATT, *Commentary*, 138.

1. Heb 1,7 quoting LXX Ps 103,12:
 ὁ ποιῶν τοὺς ἀγγέλους αὐτοῦ πνεύματα
 καὶ τοὺς λειτουργοὺς αὐτοῦ πυρὸς φλόγα
 (substituting πῦρος φλόγα for πῦρ φλέγον)
2. Heb 2,12 quoting LXX Ps 21,23:
 ἀπαγγελῶ τὸ ὄνομα σου τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς μου,
 ἐν μέσῳ ἐκκλησίας ὑμνήσω σε
 (substituting ἀπαγγελῶ for διηγῆσμαι)
3. Heb 3,10 quoting LXX Ps 94,10:
 τεσεράκοντα ἔτη διὸ προσώχθισα τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ
 (substituting ταύτῃ for ἐκείνῃ)
4. Heb 8,5 quoting LXX Exod 25,40:
 ὅρα ποιήσεις πάντα κατὰ τὸν τύπον τὸν δειχθέντα σοι ἐν τῷ ὄρει
 (inserting πάντα and substituting δειχθέντα for δεδειγμένον)
5. Heb 13,5 quoting LXX Deut 31,6,8:
 οὐ μὴ σε ἀνῶ οὐδ' οὐ μὴ σε ἐγκαταλίπω
 (substituting ἀνῶ for ἀνῆ and ἐγκαταλίπω for ἐγκαταλίπη.
 Notice the LXX rendering had a phonetic assonance of its own).

If the author of Hebrews is misquoting the LXX in such a way as to achieve phonetic assonance, these lexical choices which produce assonance must also contribute semantic sense, for no competent author intending to communicate would sacrifice meaning for mere euphony. Although he overlooks the phonetic assonance of these 'misquotes' of the OT, K. Thomas examines these OT citations in Hebrews and concludes that in Heb 2,12; 3,10; 8,5 and 10,5-7 the variations were introduced by the author to strengthen the argument of the epistle⁽¹⁾. The author's intended semantic sense was apparently communicated while simultaneously achieving assonance.

What could possibly motivate an author, and a divinely inspired author at that, to such phonetic manipulation? To our modern tastes, such rhyme and assonance may seem best reserved for television advertising jingles: "Winston tastes good, like a cigarette should!" But what effect would such phonetic techniques have on the first-century Hellenistic ear? Since the achievement of phonetic assonance would be best displayed if read aloud, could it be that the epistle to the Hebrews was written to be read aloud, and therefore the author took care to use a compositional style that would conform to the principles of good oral delivery?

⁽¹⁾ K. J. THOMAS, "The Old Testament Citations in Hebrews", *Studies in the Septuagint: Origins, Recensions, and Interpretations* (ed. S. JELICOE) (New York 1974) 507-529.

George Kennedy argues that

We need to keep in mind that the Bible in early Christian times was more often heard when read aloud to a group than read privately; very few early Christians owned copies of the Bible and some did not know how to read. To a greater extent than any modern text, the Bible retained an oral and linear quality for its audience⁽¹²⁾.

He therefore exhorts NT exegetes to read the Bible as a speech.

There is some debate about whether Hebrews found its origin as a sermon or as an epistle. If it originated as a sermon, then the use of phonetic ornamentation is particularly apt.

But even if it was originally composed as an epistle, it still has a claim to oral delivery. When a letter was delivered in the first century, it was usually read aloud and its audience perceived the contents of the letter as following the pattern of a speech⁽¹³⁾. Is there any evidence that the phonetic manipulation observed in the "misquoting" of Ps 40 may have been motivated by principles of oration?

The *Institutio Oratoria* of Quintilian⁽¹⁴⁾ preserves for us the best of the first-century's rhetorical principles⁽¹⁵⁾. Whether or not the book of Hebrews was intended to be read aloud, even literary works, according to Quintilian, adhered to principles of good first-century oration. Admonishing that the pen must be "slow yet sure", he exhorts that every thought must be first criticized and then, once approved, arranged with care:

For we must select both thoughts and words and weigh them one by one. This done, we must consider the order in which they should be placed, and must examine all the possible *varieties of rhythm*, refusing necessarily to place each word in the order in which it occurs to us. In order to do this with the utmost care, we must frequently revise what we have just *written*⁽¹⁶⁾. (emphasis mine)

Given that the NT writings were written with the intent to be read aloud, it would not be surprising to find that the style of its composition was influenced accordingly by standard rhetorical practices of that day.

Quintilian cites many rhetorical techniques of rhythmic arrangement and ornamentation of style. Most relevant to the phenomenon found in the

⁽¹²⁾ G. A. KENNEDY, *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill, NC 1984) 5.

⁽¹³⁾ Ibid., 87.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Quintilian, *The Institutio Oratoria* (LCL; Cambridge 1958).

⁽¹⁵⁾ Quintilian was born c. AD 35 in Spain. At the age of sixteen he traveled to Rome where he received his education and spent most of his life as a teacher of rhetoric and as a pleader. One of his better known cases was a trial of the Jewish Queen Bernice, the same Bernice before whom the apostle Paul appeared in Caesarea. Pliny the Younger was one of Quintilian's famous pupils. In AD 90 Quintilian retired from teaching and over the next nine years produced a twelve-book series on the principles of rhetorical oration.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Quintilian, *Inst.* 10.3.5, (LCL 4,94-95).

'misquotes' of Heb 10, is his long list of phonetic techniques which were practiced as good oratorical style in the first century.

One of the many techniques Quintilian recommends for ornamentation of style is paronomasia, "the [phonetic] resemblance, equality or contrast of words" (17). There are, according to Quintilian, four different forms of play upon phonetic resemblance (18). One form is when the words selected will achieve assonance of equal length and have similar terminations, a technique he calls parison. The term parison describes the nature of the variations which form the σῶ-μα-δέ/τῶ-μα-τα pairing in Heb 10,5,6. A second form of phonetic play is when clauses conclude with like syllables, as is found in Heb 10,5b,6 and in 10,7c,d. When two or more sentences end in this way it is called homoeoteleuton (19). Furthermore, Quintilian teaches that the highest achievement of this phonetic play is when both the beginnings and endings of two or more clauses correspond "in such a way that there is close resemblance between the words, with cadence and termination virtually identical" (20).

Though the results of paronomasia may sound contrived to our modern ears, various forms of this rhetorical technique were apparently highly prized in the first century. The very type of phenomenon observable in the variations of Heb 10 as it 'misquotes' the LXX is therefore found to be recommended by Quintilian as highly regarded ornamentation of style.

Could it be that the value placed upon the euphony produced by these techniques of oration took precedence over the "literal" quotation of sources in the first century? It is well known that quotations in the first century were freely rendered with little concern for the precision that we so highly value today. Josephus admits the influence of rhetorical principles when he explains some of the variations and omissions from the sources in his writing as motivated by concern for how his work would *sound* to the Greek ear (21).

Our modern society, with its advanced printing technology and its copyright laws, values precision in quotations above all else. The highest form of quotation is achieved with exacting precision, even to the point of misspelling what was misspelled in the source. Because of the high value we place on exact literal quotations, the handling of the OT sources by the NT authors may seem to some to be careless at best and culpable at worst. But perhaps the author of Hebrews, and his co-authors of the NT, in 'misquoting' the OT were in fact reaching for the highest first-century

(17) Ibid., 9.3.66, (LCL 3, 485).

(18) Ibid., 491.

(19) This same term is used in textual criticism to describe the inadvertent omission of text during copying due to the similarity of sentence endings.

(20) Ibid., 493.

(21) L. H. FELDMAN, "Use, Authority and Exegesis of Mikra in the Writings of Josephus", *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (ed. M. J. MULDER) (CRINT; Philadelphia 1988) 479.

Psalm 40, 7-9 in Translation and Quotation

zebah ūminhāh lō' hāpašā

θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν οὐκ ἠθέλησας
θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν οὐκ ἠθέλησας

'oznayim kāritā lī

*ὠτία δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι
*σῶμα δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι

*'olāh wahātā'ah lō' šā'āl*ētā*

*ὀλοκαυτώμα καὶ περὶ ἀμαρτίας οὐκ *ἤτησας
*ὀλοκαυτώματα καὶ περὶ ἀμαρτίας οὐκ *εὐδόκησας

'āz 'āmari hinnēh-bā' tī

τότε ἔτιπον Ἰδοὺ ἦκω,
τότε ἔτιπον Ἰδοὺ ἦκω,

bingillat-sēper kātūb 'ālāy

ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου γέγραπται περὶ ἐμοῦ
ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου γέγραπται περὶ ἐμοῦ

la'āsōt-^eṣonekā 'ēlōhay hāpāsī

*τοῦ ποιῆσαι τὸ θελημα σου, ὁ θεός μου, ἐβουλήθην
*τοῦ ποιῆσαι ὁ θεός τὸ θελημα σου

w'elōtātēkā be'itōk mē'ay

καὶ τὸν νόμον σου ἐν μέσῳ τῆς κοιτίας μου.

MT 40, 7a Sacrifice and offering you do not desire
LXX 39, 7a Sacrifice and offering you did not desire
Heb 10, 5b Sacrifice and offering you did not desire

MT 40, 7b Ears were dug for me
LXX 39, 7b Ears you prepared for me
Heb 10, 5b but a body you prepared for me

MT 40, 7 Burnt offering and sin offering you did not demand
LXX 39, 7c Burnt offering and sin offering you did not demand
Heb 10, 6 [with] Burnt offerings and sin offering you were not pleased

MT 40, 8a Thereupon I said, "Behold! I come
LXX 39, 8a Then I said, "Behold! I have come
Heb 10, 7a Then I said, "Behold! I have come

MT 40, 8b in the scroll of the book it is written about me
LXX 39, 8b in the scroll of the book it is written about me
Heb 10, 7b in the scroll of the book it is written about me

MT 40, 9a to do your will, my God, I desire
LXX 39, 8b to do you will, my God, I desire
Heb 10, 7c to do, O God, your will

MT 40, 9b and your law is within me
LXX 39, 9b and your law is in the middle of my belly

* The asterisk marks the variants.

standards of composition based, not on the value of precision, but on the value of rhetorical ornamentation⁽²²⁾.

I suggest that the author of Hebrews was expressing his argument in Heb 10 in his best rhetorical style and that what has been misunderstood by modern standards as 'misquoting' the OT added the very quality that made his argument very attractive to the ear of his Hellenistic audience⁽²³⁾.

According to Quintilian, one of the functions of paronomasia is to attract the ear of the audience and to excite their attention for that element of the argument⁽²⁴⁾. To put it in modern linguistic terms, the phonetic assonance of paronomasia effects marked prominence of certain elements of the paragraph, highlighting and emphasizing those particular thoughts. In ancient Greek, marked prominence was achieved by unusual word order, repetition, use of particles, intensifying verbs, and shift in verbal tense⁽²⁵⁾. Based on Quintilian's description of the function of paronomasia, I suggest that phonetic assonance was another highly stylized, rhetorical method of marking semantic prominence.

A catchy phrase sticks in the mind. Television commercials use phonetic techniques to advertise a product because the consumer is likely to remember the product advertised. A similar goal was attained by using phonetic techniques in persuasive argument. Those elements of the argument that the rhetor wished to have stick in the minds of his audience, he ornamented with phonetic word play. By quoting Ps 40, but with selective variations which achieved paronomasia, the author of Hebrews was highlighting these variations in the ear, and the mind, of his audience. The prominence of these elements would cause them to stand out in the argument being put forth, thus enhancing the audience's memory of the argument.

In conclusion, the four variations which comprise the "misquote" are systematically related by the rhetorical technique of paronomasia. This indicates that they are the deliberate result of the creative mind of the author of Hebrews, and were, therefore, not found in the first-century Greek text of Psalm 40.

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⁽²²⁾ Such rhetorical principles as Quintilian documents were practiced from the classical period in Athens onward, as Aristotle's *Art of Rhetoric* shows. Aristotle (c. 330 BC) and Quintilian (c. AD 90) bracket the period of time in which both the Old Testament was translated into Greek and the New Testament was written. Principles of oration may account for other Old Testament "misquotes" found in the New Testament. They may also account for some of the variations between the Greek translations of the Old Testament and the Hebrew text.

⁽²³⁾ The rhetorical skill of the author of Hebrews has also been explored by M. COSBY in his published doctoral dissertation, *The Rhetorical Composition and Function of Hebrews 11* (Macon, GA 1988).

⁽²⁴⁾ Quintilian, *Inst.* 9.3.66, (LCL 3, 485).

⁽²⁵⁾ K. CALLOW, *Discourse Considerations in Translating the Word of God* (Grand Rapids 1974) 52.

RES BIBLIOGRAPHICAE

Un important commentaire du troisième évangile⁽¹⁾

Voici le premier des trois volumes qui, dans la série scientifique EKK de haut niveau, doivent commenter l'évangile de Luc. Le commentateur n'est pas un inconnu. Rappelons surtout l'important état des questions, raisonné et critique, qu'en 1978 (2) 1988 il a consacré à *Luc le Théologien* (3).

L'introduction au commentaire peut donc prendre une forme extrêmement ramassée (13-26). La manière dont l'auteur y définit ses positions mérite l'attention. Sept points sont pris en considération:

1. Le texte pose des problèmes excessivement difficiles pour un certain nombre de versets; cela n'empêche pas que, dans l'ensemble, il nous est bien transmis.

2. Construction et style. Après les étapes préparatoires de 1,5-2,52 et 3,1-4,13, le récit évangélique est divisé en trois grandes sections: 4,14-9,50; 9,51-19,27; 19,28-24,53. La division entre 19,27 et 19,28 se réclame d'une curieuse considération logique: le voyage à Jérusalem, que la section centrale le représente, se termine «logiquement» avec l'arrivée à Jérusalem. Ce n'est pas précisément ce dont parle 19,28, où se poursuit une approche qui, précisément, ne se terminera pas par une arrivée à Jérusalem, mais par une entrée dans le Temple (19,45), d'où l'on ne sortira plus avant 21,37-38. Curieusement aussi, F. B. dit et répète que le mot *exodos* désignant le but de la montée de Jésus à Jérusalem (9,31) est un euphémisme pour sa mort (15 et 496), quitte à ajouter qu'il n'y a pas seulement cela (497). L'auteur avait été mieux inspiré lorsqu'il écrivait: «Lors de la Transfiguration, Luc évite la trivialité du langage univoque: c'est sur l'*exodos* de Jésus et non sur la croix que porte l'entretien...» (3). Certains détails peuvent donc être discutés. Peu de chose à côté des excellentes remarques sur l'art avec lequel Luc compose son récit, varie son style, sait faire voir concrètement les choses: ce n'est pas pour rien que la tradition a fait de lui un peintre.

(1) François BOVON, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas*. 1. Teilband: Lk 1,1-9,50 (Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament III/1). Zürich, Benziger Verlag - Neukirchen-Vluyn, Neukirchener Verlag, 1989. VIII-524 p. 16,5 x 24. DM 128.

(2) Voir *Bib* 63 (1982) 266-267. Ses principaux articles ont été groupés dans deux recueils: *Lukas in neuer Sicht*. Gesammelte Aufsätze (Biblich-theologische Studien 8; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1985); *L'œuvre de Luc*. Études d'exégèse et de théologie (LD 130; Paris 1987). Il nous paraît indispensable d'ajouter la présentation d'ensemble que F. B. a faite de «Luc-Actes» dans l'ouvrage collectif *Évangiles synoptiques et Actes des apôtres* (Petite bibliothèque des sciences bibliques, Nouveau Testament 4; Paris 1981) 195-283. Cet exposé n'est pas mentionné dans le commentaire, dont cependant il pourrait utilement éclairer l'introduction.

(3) «Effet de réel et flou prophétique dans l'œuvre de Luc», *A cause de l'Évangile*. Mélanges J. Dupont (LD 123; Paris 1985) 356.

3. La langue du troisième évangile est un bon spécimen de *koinè* littéraire, évitant le laisser-aller du parler populaire (on le voit à la manière dont Luc corrige énergiquement le grec de Marc) mais sans verser dans l'affectation de la réaction puriste qui se manifestera un peu plus tard. Il évite les sémismes mais sait donner à ses récits une coloration biblique qui témoigne de sa familiarité avec la Septante. Ces justes remarques auraient peut-être appelé une observation complémentaire sur l'inconstance de Luc.

4. Le genre littéraire de l'ouvrage dépasse celui d'une monographie historique. Ce que Luc rapporte, c'est l'acte décisif de salut que Dieu a réalisé par son Fils mais qu'Israël, son destinataire immédiat, a refusé. Les Écritures faisaient déjà prévoir cet aveuglement dramatique, qui ne saurait faire obstacle à l'universalité du dessein divin. Cet angle de vision doit rassurer et raffermir les chrétiens en face de l'attitude polémique du judaïsme.

5. Les sources utilisées par Luc dans son évangile: Marc, la source des *Logia*, une documentation qui lui est propre. En gros, F.B. s'en tient donc aux positions communément admises, sans se laisser impressionner par quelques voix discordantes. Mais en gros seulement, car il apporte des nuances. De Marc, Luc aurait connu une version qui s'écarte un peu de la forme canonique; pour la Passion, il lui préfère un «récit concurrent» se rapprochant de Jean. La *Quelle* se voit retirer la «petite apocalypse» (Lc 17,20-37) qui proviendrait du *Sondergut*. Lc 1-2 reposerait avant tout sur une légende relative à la naissance du Baptiste; Luc l'aurait augmentée de traditions concernant Jésus ainsi que des trois cantiques, provenant de trois milieux différents.

6. L'auteur nous informe de son projet (Lc 1,1-4), mais il ne dit rien de sa personne. Le très bon niveau culturel dont témoigne son ouvrage le situe naturellement dans une couche sociale aisée. Il semble avoir appartenu à un milieu grec, mais très attiré par la religion juive dès avant sa conversion au christianisme. En fonction surtout de Ac 16,9-10, F.B. est enclin à le considérer comme un Macédonien, ayant peut-être des attaches plus précises dans la ville de Philippi, mais aussi des contacts avec Troas. On voit ainsi revivre, à l'encontre de la tradition qui parle d'une origine antiochienne, une hypothèse qui paraissait abandonnée (W.M. Ramsay, J.H. Moulton) (*). Peu importe d'ailleurs pour le lecteur de l'ouvrage à condition qu'il accepte aussi la seconde hypothèse qui lui est proposée: l'auteur n'est pas lié à une communauté chrétienne déterminée; il faisait partie d'une équipe de missionnaires itinérants analogue à celle que Paul, une génération plus tôt, avait formée autour de lui. Il n'y a en tout cas aucun doute aux yeux de F.B. que l'auteur du troisième évangile et des Actes n'a pas pu être un compagnon de Paul et ne saurait être identifié au «Luc» dont parlent Col 4,14 et 2 Tm 4,11 (il faut ajouter Phm 24). Les raisons qui, au II^e siècle, ont provoqué cette identification restent énigmatiques. Il nous paraît vrai que l'attribution de l'ouvrage à ce Luc soulève des difficultés qui ne sont pas négligeables. Mais nous ajouterions volontiers avec la *Traduction Oecuménique*

(*) W. M. RAMSAY, *St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen* (London 1895; 1925) 200-205; J. H. MOULTON, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, II (Edinburgh 1919) 19.

de la Bible: «Faut-il pour autant conclure que le troisième évangile et les Actes ne peuvent pas avoir pour auteur un compagnon de Paul et que la candidature de Luc est donc radicalement exclue? C'est au moins discutable»⁽⁵⁾.

7. La théologie de Luc donne lieu à diverses observations. Celles, par exemple, qui montrent dans la christologie et l'universalisme chrétien l'aboutissement authentique des promesses faites par Dieu à Israël, mais dont la réalisation a été rejetée par les représentants du peuple élu. Celles aussi qui refusent la division tripartite de l'histoire du salut (temps de la promesse, temps de Jésus, temps de l'Eglise) pour ne garder que deux périodes: celle de la promesse et celle de l'accomplissement. Relevons encore la manière dont le désaccord théologique entre Luc et Paul est ramené à la différence de leurs anthropologies: celle de Paul est radicalement pessimiste, tandis que l'optimisme anthropologique de Luc inviterait à parler de son humanisme. De là, deux manières différentes (mais non contradictoires) d'envisager le mystère de la Croix.

Après l'Introduction qui dit tant de choses en peu de pages, le commentaire proprement dit se conforme au schéma de la série EKKNT: chaque petite section de l'évangile fait l'objet d'une analyse globale, puis d'un commentaire détaillé se terminant par une récapitulation; ces trois étapes de l'exposé sont précédées par une bibliographie de la péricope et par la traduction que le commentateur a faite sur le texte grec. Quatre excursus s'intercalent dans ce schéma: le premier, «Naissance virginale et histoire des religions» (64-70), introduit l'étude de la péricope de l'Annonciation (1,26-38); le deuxième, «le diable» (196s.), à propos du récit des tentations dans le désert (4,1-13); le troisième, «la Parole de Dieu» (230s.), à propos du premier emploi lucanien de cette expression (5,2); le quatrième, «le pardon des péchés» (247s.), à l'occasion de l'épisode du paralytique (5,17-26).

Non sans raison, F.B. consacre au prologue par lequel Luc introduit son ouvrage (Lc 1,1-4) autant d'espace (29-43) qu'à sa propre introduction. Luc explicite ici son projet, qui est tout ensemble et inséparablement celui d'un historien et celui d'un croyant (comme l'a bien mis en valeur l'article, non mentionné, de V. Fusco, «Progetto storiografico e progetto teologico nell'opera lucana»⁽⁶⁾). La phrase fait l'objet d'une bonne analyse ainsi que d'un minutieux examen grammatical et lexicographique. On n'en ressent que mieux l'absence d'une bonne approche rhétorique. Le commentateur achoppe dès le premier mot, ἐπειδήπερ, «puisque précisément», où l'enclitique περ renvoie normalement à ce qui a été dit antérieurement (la phrase analogue de Ac 15,24-26 commence effectivement par le mot ἐπειδή). Cette difficulté grammaticale nous paraît bien légère en regard de la prouesse oratoire que représente l'accumulation, dans ce verset 1, de huit

⁽⁵⁾ Traduction œcuménique de la Bible. Edition intégrale. Nouveau Testament (Paris 1972) 361. (Introduction aux Actes des Apôtres) = *La Bible, traduction œcuménique* (Paris 1988) 2615.

⁽⁶⁾ Associazione Biblica Italiana, *La storiografia nella Bibbia* (Atti della XXVIII Settimana biblica; Bologna 1986) 123-152.

fois le son π , si agréable à une oreille grecque (il y en a encore quatre au v. 2); He 1,1 n'arrive qu'au total de six! Au v. 3, la seule considération du rythme de la phrase suffirait déjà à lever toute ambiguïté sur le rapport à établir entre les trois adverbess et les deux verbes auxquels ils peuvent se rattacher. Au v. 2, cette même considération du rythme oratoire devrait suffire à exclure l'interprétation qui identifie les $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\pi\tau\alpha\iota$, «ceux qui ont vu de leurs propres yeux», à ceux qui sont devenus «serviteurs de la Parole». La pensée n'est pas différente ici de celle de la fin de l'évangile et du début des Actes, où, par exemple, Joseph-Barsabbas et Matthias ont tous deux assisté à tous les événements depuis le baptême de Jean jusqu'à l'Ascension, mais où seul le second est choisi par le Seigneur pour devenir témoin de la résurrection et, comme tel, porter la charge du ministère de la Parole. Ajoutons que la dette du prologue lucanien à l'égard des conventions littéraires du monde hellénistique ne doit pas empêcher de reconnaître qu'il ne se libère pas du vocabulaire de la communauté chrétienne: c'est le cas quand il parle de «serviteurs de la Parole» (la manière grecque de s'exprimer apparaît en Ac 14,12: $\delta\ \eta\gamma\omicron\upsilon\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\nu\nu\ \lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\nu$). Malgré F. B., cela nous paraît être aussi le cas dans l'emploi du verbe $\kappa\alpha\tau\eta\chi\eta\theta\eta\varsigma$ au v. 4.

L'évangile de l'enfance (1,5-2,52) se voit attribuer 120 pages (43-162), ce qui n'a rien d'excessif. Ce qui est vrai pour le récit de la naissance de Jésus: «Trotz des mannigfaltigen Ursprungs des Stoffes gestaltet Lukas eine wohldurchdachte Komposition...» (117), l'est aussi de l'ensemble des deux chapitres. Il était donc juste que la présentation d'ensemble (45-48) commence par souligner l'unité du morceau: d'un bout à l'autre, c'est le même thème, le même style, le même genre qui tient à la fois de l'historiographie biblique et du midrash. On peut ensuite s'essayer à la «Dekomposition», disons la déconstruction, destinée à identifier les matériaux exploités par l'évangéliste et à en découvrir l'origine. Le récit de Luc reposerait principalement sur une légende relative à la naissance du Baptiste; aux données de cette source, Luc aurait associé par le procédé du parallélisme les traditions disparates qu'il avait pu recueillir sur la naissance et l'enfance de Jésus. A leur sujet, F. B. croit pouvoir préciser: «Jedenfalls folgt Lukas der Spur des Paulus und der Hellenisten, während Matthäus der petrinischen Tradition nähersteht. Die Hellenisten haben diese Überlieferungen möglicherweise vom judenchristlichen Kreis des Herrenbruders Jakobus übernommen» (48). Pourquoi ne pas avouer notre difficulté à nous aventurer sur un sol aussi mouvant, où l'on ne sait plus très bien si l'on est encore sur le terrain de l'histoire ou déjà sur celui du roman? Nos réticences aussi devant certaines explications où l'idée qu'on se fait d'un texte antérieur semble empêcher de voir le texte tel qu'il est: nous pensons au commentaire de l'annonce à Marie, ou plus simplement à la manière dont est posée la question que soulève l'emploi de «premier-né» en 2,7 sans que soit envisagée la possibilité d'un rapport avec 2,22-24 (qui viendrait d'une autre source). L'intérêt accordé au signe de la mangeoire (2,7.12.16) est justement souligné; mais les explications qui sont données sur l'emplacement et la forme des mangeoires (127) remplacent-elles une référence à Is 1,3 (cf. V. Fusco, article de 1982 mentionné dans la bibliogra-

phie)(⁷)? Ajoutons que nos difficultés ne concernent pas exclusivement le problème des sources: que penser d'une conjecture comme celle qui découvre en Lc 2,1-5 une visée polémique d'une part contre le culte impérial, d'autre part contre les mouvements zélotes (117s.)?

De 3,1 à 9,50, le récit évangélique est divisé en trente-trois sections; l'uniformité du schéma suivi pour la présentation de chacune d'elles va de pair avec la souplesse que réclame l'examen des problèmes particuliers qui se rencontrent à leur propos. Nous ne pouvons ici nous engager dans ce long cheminement. Le choix d'un épisode pourrait permettre d'illustrer la méthode suivie. Nous jetons notre dévolu sur la Transfiguration qui, vers la fin de la première partie de l'évangile (9,28-36), annonce et anticipe la suite (si du moins on accepte l'équivalence de l'*exodos* de 9,31 et de l'*analèmpsîs* de 9,51). La place qui lui est faite dans le commentaire est relativement large (487-504). On se trouve d'abord devant une bibliographie qui, comme d'habitude, est très abondante. La présence de certains titres surprend à première vue: la suite montrera en quoi ils ont été utiles; il y a aussi des omissions qui peuvent étonner celui qui rêve d'un relevé exhaustif. Après une traduction serrant du plus près possible le texte original, la première partie de l'exposé analyse le morceau pris d'une manière globale. Trois questions se posent ici. D'abord celle du rapport entre la version de Luc et les deux versions parallèles de Marc et de Matthieu. Parmi les réponses possibles et effectivement défendues, Bovon opte résolument pour celle que F. Neirynck a minutieusement justifiée(⁸): Luc dépend exclusivement de Marc, dont il ne s'écarte que pour des raisons qui lui sont propres. La question ensuite de la structure: elle est traitée d'une façon d'autant plus claire qu'est provisoirement passé sous silence l'épineux problème de critique textuelle soulevé par le v. 34. Enfin la question du genre littéraire, à laquelle les exégètes apportent les réponses les plus discordantes, appellerait une solution complexe faisant appel aussi bien à des traditions juives concernant Moïse et le Messie qu'à des mythes païens relatifs à des divinités polymorphes; la coloration de cette mixture pourrait être cherchée dans l'apocalyptique. Ajoutons tout de suite que ces conjectures aventureuses n'influencent heureusement pas les explications exégétiques qui constituent la deuxième partie de l'exposé (492-502).

Parmi ces explications relevons avant tout celles qui concernent la signification christologique de l'événement: celui-ci n'est compris ni dans le sens d'une intronisation messianique, ni dans celui d'une révélation de la nature divine de Jésus, mais comme une manifestation de la relation qui unit Jésus à Dieu. La transformation qui se produit dans son aspect extérieur «n'est pas seulement, comme dans le cas de Moïse (Ex 34,29-35), le reflet d'une gloire déjà reçue; c'est une fenêtre qui s'ouvre sur la relation en-

(⁷) V. FUSCO, «Il messaggio e il segno. Riflessioni esegetiche sul racconto lucano della natività», *Parola e Spirito* (ed. C. C. MARCHESELLI) (FS. S. Cipriani I; Brescia 1982) 293-333.

(⁸) F. NEIRYNCK, «Minor Agreements Matthew-Luke in the Transfiguration Story», *Orientierung an Jesus. Zur Theologie der Synoptiker. Für J. Schmid* (ed. P. HOFFMANN) (Freiburg 1973) 253-266.

tre le Père et le Fils, relation qui sera explicitée par la voix céleste» (495). La présence des trois apôtres, auxquels s'adresse cette voix céleste, assure en même temps à la scène une portée ecclésiologique qui n'apparaissait pas dans l'épiphanie du Jourdain (502): la révélation du mystère de la filiation divine de Jésus franchit ici une nouvelle étape (501, n. 64). Relevons encore, à propos de l'expression «après ces paroles» au v. 28, la manière excellente dont est explicité le rapport entre l'épisode et les déclarations précédentes (493). En revanche, on pourra rester perplexe devant les hypothèses invoquées pour expliquer la datation «environ huit jours» substituée aux «six jours» de Mc (493s.). A propos du sommeil éprouvé par les disciples (v. 32a), on ne peut qu'approuver le rapprochement avec Gethsémani (Mc 14,37-42), et la façon dont s'exprime le v. 32b permet de supposer que les disciples n'ont pas cédé au sommeil; mais il peut paraître aventureux de parler alors d'un état de conscience «second», de caractère plus ou moins extatique (497s.). Pour éclairer l'*exodos* dont il est question au v. 31, un renvoi à Ac 1,21-22 aurait sans doute été plus utile que des citations de Lc 24,50-51 et Ac 1,9-11 (497).

Les deux dernières pages réservées au récit de la Transfiguration répondent au titre *Wirkungsgeschichte und Zusammenfassung* (502-504). Les indications que le début et la fin de cette section fournissent sur les résonances du récit évangélique ne manquent pas d'intérêt mais peuvent paraître maigres. Peut-on dire qu'il s'agit encore de la «péricope» (502, n. 70)? Jusqu'à une époque toute récente, la tradition chrétienne s'est intéressée à la Transfiguration comme événement que l'on croyait pouvoir atteindre en faisant abstraction des récits qui s'y référaient dans des perspectives différentes et en l'interprétant sous des jours différents. Dans ces conditions, il n'était sans doute pas opportun de répéter ce que, dans la même série EKKNT, J. Gnilka avait déjà exposé dans son commentaire de Marc⁽⁹⁾. C'est donc à juste titre que Bovon s'attache avant tout à préciser ce qui lui paraît caractériser davantage le point de vue de Luc: mise en valeur de la manière dont, pour le Christ, la gloire est inséparable de la souffrance (comme Lc 24,26 l'exprime si bien); enseignement destiné immédiatement à trois disciples mais qui concerne l'Eglise de tous les temps et soutient son espérance au milieu des épreuves (cf. Ac 14,22).

Concluons. Ce grand commentaire de Luc est réellement ce qu'il veut être: scientifique et critique. Il appelle et encourage une approche critique. Nous ne nous en sommes pas privé, y montrant la présence et de positions qui nous semblent solides et de points qui nous paraissent discutables. On ne s'y trompera pas, cette attitude critique ne contredit en rien la grande admiration que nous inspire ce gros volume ni la gratitude que nous éprouvons à l'égard de son auteur. L'information sur laquelle repose le commentaire est d'une ampleur étonnante, sans rien enlever pourtant à l'indépendance d'esprit du commentateur. L'acribie dont témoigne l'examen du texte évangélique s'accorde avec l'attention du croyant qui y découvre un message de vie. Bovon reconnaît volontiers sa dette à l'égard de ses devanciers,

⁽⁹⁾ J. GNILKA, *Das Evangelium nach Markus*, 2. Teilband: Mk 8,27-16,20 (EKKNT II/2; Zürich-Neukirchen 1979) 37-39.

ceux qui ont écrit sur tel ou tel point particulier ou, par exemple, l'imposant commentaire de J.A. Fitzmyer publié aux États-Unis en deux volumes (1981 et 1985)⁽¹⁰⁾; son propre commentaire constituera, pour longtemps sans doute, un point de référence indispensable dans les études lucaniennes. Des traductions sont prévues, en français notamment, qui contribueront à une diffusion bien méritée. Et nous avons bon espoir que ce commentaire ne connaîtra pas la mésaventure de son grand devancier, celui de H. Schürmann, qui n'a pas réussi à doubler le cap de Lc 9,50⁽¹¹⁾: puisse le tome II paraître dans un délai raisonnable⁽¹²⁾! Le commentaire existe à présent en version française; *L'Évangile selon saint Luc* (Commentaire du Nouveau Testament – Nouvelle Série IIIa; Genève, Labor et Fides, 1991).

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⁽¹⁰⁾ J.A. FITZMYER, *The Gospel According to Luke (I-IX)* (The Anchor Bible 28; Garden City 1981); *The Gospel According to Luke (X-XXIV)* (The Anchor Bible 28A; Garden City 1985).

⁽¹¹⁾ H. SCHÜRMANN, *Das Lukasevangelium, I. Kommentar zu Kap. 1,1-9,50* (HTKNT III/1; Freiburg 1969; ²1982).

⁽¹²⁾ Quelques *corrigenda* notés au passage. P. 4: l'ouvrage du U. Busse est de 1977 (non 1979). P. 14, dernière ligne: lire Lk 4,14 (non 3,14). P. 29, dans le titre de Güttgemanns, lire Beziehungen (non Beziehung). Lacune entre p. 116 et 117, entre p. 119 et 120. P. 132, milieu: lire Lk 2,1-14 (non 2,1-4). P. 138, le nom de Miyoshi est écrit deux fois Miyoschi. P. 227, l'article d'Abogourin se trouve aux pages 587-602 (non 502). P. 273, ligne 5: Mk 2,8 eût sans doute mieux convenu que Mk 3,5. P. 367, le volume collectif *Evangelizare pauperibus* n'a pas été publié par B. Antonini, qui en est seulement le premier collaborateur dans l'ordre alphabétique.

RECENSIONES

Vetus Testamentum

Georg FISCHER, *Jahwe unser Gott. Sprache, Aufbau und Erzähltechnik in der Berufung des Mose (Ex 3-4)* (OBO 91). Freiburg/Schweiz, Universitätsverlag – Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989. 265 p. 16 × 23,5. SFr 68,—

The analysis Georg Fischer offers in his study on the 'Call of Moses' narrative in Exod 3-4 is representative of a methodological turn in the field of biblical studies. Ever since the rise of historical criticism in the 19th century until about the late 1960s, the literary approach to the biblical writings almost exclusively focused on issues concerning their genesis. Regarding the Old Testament, the problem of the literary growth of the Pentateuch undoubtedly has been the pivotal question for many generations of scholars (on this, see, for example, R. N. Whybray's critical appraisal, *The Making of the Pentateuch* [Sheffield 1987]).

In recent years, however, biblical studies have made a remarkable U-turn. The soliloquy of the diachronically-oriented approach to the biblical compositions has been cut short by new accesses which can generally be labeled as synchronic. The literary history of the Old Testament texts, and especially the origin of the Pentateuch, is no longer the absolute center of exegetical interest. The final text, whether its form is determined canonically ('canonical text') or text-critically (usually MT), is taken for granted. Instead of digging up a hypothetical process of growth, scholars concentrate on the analysis of the text as it now stands, in view of discovering its (perhaps sometimes equally hypothetical) meaning and function.

The synchronic literary approach comprises a great variety of applications which can be categorized under a restricted number of methods. Each of them has its own procedure and its area of special attention. The most important methods then seem to be structural analysis, semiotics, rhetorical criticism and narratology. We may, however, consider these methodological approaches to be variants of literary criticism as determined by contemporary general literature in so far as they focus on the literary analysis and interpretation of the final text of the biblical narratives and compositions. Consequently, the above-mentioned synchronic methods have much ground in common with each other, even to the extent that one is rather talking about different names for one and the same constantly

developing approach. This certainly holds true for semiotics which in biblical studies resulted from structural analysis, as well as for narratology which emanates from rhetorical criticism. Moreover, the new biblical literary criticism, whatever its particular approach may be, gives special attention to the composition and structure of the final text, and there is no doubt that the structural approaches of the late sixties entered into biblical studies.

The study Georg Fischer has made of the 'Call of Moses' narrative in Exodus 3-4 clearly demonstrates this roughly-sketched recent methodological development. The analysis of the famous pericope of Exod 3-4, containing a passage on the divine name Yahweh (3,13-15) and evoking such widely divergent interpretations, is conceived by the author as an exegetical exercise in the synchronic literary approach to Pentateuchal texts. G. Fischer's work resulted from his doctoral research carried out at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome under the direction of Jean Louis Ska, who is well-known for his illuminative narrative analysis of various compositions in the Pentateuch (e.g., *Le passage de la mer. Étude de la construction, du style et de la symbolique d'Ex 14,1-31* [Rome 1986]) and who, moreover, recently published a manual to 'narratology' (*Introduction to the Analysis of Hebrew Narratives* [Rome 1990]).

In the first chapter of his study, G. Fischer begins with a literal rendering of the original text of the 'Call of Moses' narrative. The translation is based on and arranged according to the Masoretic text, which is taken for granted. In connection with this translation the author makes grammatical and semantic comments on various Hebrew forms and expressions in view of justifying his linguistic interpretation of the text. The second section of the introductory chapter deals with the question of the delimitation of the pericope. G. Fischer regards Exod 3,1-4,17 (God calls Moses who must come to the rescue of the Israelites) as a narrative unit that has been combined with the surrounding passages, 2,23-25 (the Israelites in distress) and 4,18-26 (Moses' response to the divine mission).

The approach to the text of Exod 3-4 as found in Chapter One requires some critical comments. First of all, it seems rather illogical to discuss the delimitation of the biblical pericope *after* having offered an annotated translation of the passage considered to be a narrative unit. This procedure presents the reader with a *fait accompli*. As it seems to me, literary analysis of the biblical text should better start by demarcating the text in its context. With respect to the 'Call of Moses' narrative, scholars seriously discuss the delimitation of the pericope. Like all proposals made by other exegetes, G. Fischer's division is somewhat arbitrary and is consequently open to argument. For example, even though he puts forward literary arguments to make 4,17 the end of the pericope, his option seems to be dictated by the Masoretic *petucha* after verse 17. There is a lot to be said, however, for taking 4,19, on the grounds of a literary inclusion between 2,23 and 4,19, as the end of the narrative. From this angle, Exod 4,20-31 could be a new passage consisting of four scenes (cf. C. Houtman, *Exodus*, Part I [Kampen 1986]).

Secondly, it is even more unusual to analyse the Hebrew text of a biblical pericope critically on the basis of a *translation*. In my view, the narratological standpoint that "dialogue with a text begins with the translation" (J.L. Ska, *Analysis of Hebrew Narratives*, 1) should be nuanced. The rendering of the ancient text into a contemporary language is, first and foremost, for the benefit of the non-specialists who may certainly profit from a good (literal and literary) translation. From the outset, however, biblical scholars should work with the original linguistic form of the text, i.e. the Hebrew text, that remains the sole ground for making a sound narrative analysis. Of course, the Hebrew text of the Old Testament is not uncomplicated. Both its textual and linguistic form cause difficulties. With regard to the former, current biblical criticism can no longer have implicit faith in the Masoretic text. "Der massoretische Text von Ex 3-4 weist wenige textkritische Probleme auf" (4) is, consequently, an unverified statement which needs further investigation. Moreover, G. Fischer gives the impression of trusting the critical apparatus of *BHS* (see, e.g., p. 113, n. 47 and p. 159, n. 173). Furthermore, a serious text-critical study of Exod 3-4 does not necessarily aim at preparing the most original text. Instead of 'making a text' it can rather reveal important aspects of the literary development of the text which, classically, is exclusively treated in source/redaction criticism (for the relationship between text-criticism and redaction criticism, see the recent studies by H.-J. Stipp, *BZ* 34 [1990] 16-37 and *ETL* 66 [1990] 143-159). As far as the linguistic form of the text is concerned, I am of the opinion that a rigorous arrangement of the syntactic hierarchy of the Hebrew text is the most useful textual base for both the synchronic (literary criticism) and diachronic (redaction criticism) inquiry into the narrative. Such a syntactic chart shows the sentence-structure of the textual unit. The clauses are recorded within a scheme that by means of indentations displays the larger syntactic relations, i.e. the narrative stratum, the direct speeches, the embedded direct speeches and the correlation between main clauses and subordinate clauses (on this, see E. Talstra, *ETL* 63 [1987] 95-105; M. Vervenne, "Hebrew Verb Form and Function", *Bible et informatique: Méthodes, outils, résultats* [Paris-Genève 1989] 605-640; C. Hardmeier-E. Talstra, *ZAW* 101 [1989] 408-428). In this respect, it would be fully acceptable to make a working translation of the syntactically arranged text but then without adding redundant grammatical comments, e.g., "Die Kopula wird im Hebräischen nicht ausgedrückt" (13). On the other hand, some explanations of the Hebrew syntax, like the one found on Exod 3,1 (x-qatal + qotel + wayyiqtol + wayyiqtol), are more accurate. For this, advantage could have been taken of A. Niccacci's studies (e.g., *Sintassi del verbo ebraico nella prosa biblica classica* [Jerusalem 1986]; = *The Syntax of the Verb in Classical Hebrew Prose* [Sheffield 1990]).

The second chapter of the book is devoted to the study of the form and structure of Exod 3,1-4,17. The author first offers a thoroughgoing and revealing analysis of the complexity of the literary form of the text. He argues that even though the pericope contains a number of schemes which have been tied together in a rather artificial way, the text of Exod 3,1-4,17

does not yield itself to source-criticism. On the contrary, this narrative is a homogeneous composition. According to G. Fischer, the original unity of the text is evidenced by the alternation of word and reply (40), the use of the traditional account of the mission of a deliverer as a basic narrative pattern (55), and the unfolding of the conflict between the divine will and its fulfillment (61-62).

The *Einheitlichkeit* of Exod 3-4 is further developed in the subsequent sections of this chapter. G. Fischer holds that two complementary structures can be distinguished within the narrative. The first structure, which is compounded by means of key verbs and semantic fields (82), is dynamic in that it stresses the course of events: 'seeing' (3,1-9), 'sending' (3,10-22), 'believing' (4,1-9), and 'speaking' (4,10-17). The second structural pattern, on the other hand, seems to be more static. On the basis of single words (nouns and verbs) which form series or strings, the author divides the narrative into six tableau (*Bilder*) emphasizing the mighty intervention of Yahweh (95): the staging of the actants (3,1-6), the divine behest (3,7-12), the name of the one who sends (3,13-15), Yahweh's plan (3,16-22), Yahweh's strength (4,1-9), Aaron's appointment (4,10-17). The continuity of semantic fields, tableau and single verses is then examined in the third and longest chapter of the book. Here G. Fischer analyses the plot of the story, and more especially, the unfolding of the narrative. Special attention is given to the narrative technique of Exod 3-4 and its relationship with other Pentateuch texts of which primarily the book of Genesis and Exodus 1-15 should be mentioned. With respect to this, it is rather surprising that the author does not refer to J. L. Ska's studies on the relationship between Exod 14 and Gen 1 ff. (in n. 230, p. 181 no reference is made to J. L. Ska, "Séparation des eaux", *NRT* 103 [1981] 512-532).

No doubt the detailed narrative analysis of the 'Call of Moses' that G. Fischer has offered in chapters 2 and 3 of his book contributes to a better understanding of this Exodus composition. I would like, however, to make comments on a few points in the sections concerned.

One of the main conclusions of the author's narratological study is again that Exod 3-4 is an original coherent composition: "Wir sind auf keine Spannungen gestoßen, die nicht innerhalb einer einheitlichen Erzählung zu erklären gewesen wären. Was von manchen als Spannung oder Doppelung (und damit als Grund für Quellenscheidung) angesehen wird, läßt sich mit ganz wenigen Annahmen erklären: — Der Erzähler präsentiert Jahwe und Mose als zwei Personen mit verschiedenen Gesichtspunkten. — Die Sicht des Erzählers hebt sich von der Jahwes und Moses ab. — Erzählung und Dialog können in ihrem Fortschreiten Aussagen weiterentwickeln" (201-202). With this G. Fischer goes counter to the classic *communis opinio* that takes Exod 3-4 as the result of combining two originally independent narratives (J and E), possibly rewritten by a JE redactor (see, e.g., W.H. Schmidt, *Exodus* [1974]). Even though I do not hold the opinion that the process of growth of the 'Call of Moses' narrative should be explained source-critically, it appears to me that sound redaction criticism of the pericope reveals an artificial unit which has been produced during a rather long and complicated process of bringing together

existing traditions and creative new interpretations. Actually, G. Fischer does not ignore this possibility: "Es ist möglich, daß einmal 3,22 das Ende der Berufung Moses war. Zu einem späteren Zeitpunkt könnte in enger sprachlicher Annäherung 4,1-17 formuliert und angefügt worden sein. Dabei ist die Verbindung so gut gelungen, daß wir insgesamt eine einheitliche Erzählung vor uns haben. Es gibt kein Wort in Ex 3,1-22 und in Ex 3,1-4,17 das nicht im Gesamt sinnvoll und für seine besondere Aussage erforderlich ist" (202). Moreover, with regard to Exod 3,6-7, he even seems to rely uncritically on the rather questionable ideas of W. Fuß (see p. 111, n. 41 and p. 124, n. 74), or on the view of R.N. Whybray that the Pentateuch as a whole was written by one author (for a critical review of Whybray's work, see J.A. Emerton, *VT* 39 [1989] 110-116). One should, however, clearly distinguish between the narrative as we have it *now* and its literary *history*. All will agree that the *present* form of this Exodus story did not result from a mere collation by an untidy redactor. The final composition certainly is an intentionally meaningful and coherent construction that must be analysed as such. It is this narrative that is the subject of any narratological investigation. This does not mean, however, that narrative analysis can prove that the present form of the story concerned is also the original shape. The skilful intertwining of various schemes and the structuring of the narrative with the help of key words can also evince creative redactional activities.

Although the analysis of the narrative technique and plot in Exod 3-4 as given in Ch.3 of G. Fischer's book is in general very clarifying, his examination contains some weak points. I briefly concentrate on two of them.

G. Fischer refers on repeated occasions to alliterations and phonetic affinities in MT (cf. 113, n. 47; 123, n. 71; 138, n. 117; 197, n. 264). With regard to Exod 3,6 (113), of which the first six words of the divine *Selbstvorstellung* being with an *aleph* ('nky 'lhy 'byk 'lhy 'brhm 'lhy), he suggests that the alliteration might have been produced intentionally. The argument put forward is, on the one hand, the repetition of 'lhy in 3,6 against 3,16, and the asyndetic connection between 'lhy 'brhm and 'lhy yshq on the other. The repetition of 'lhy, however, also occurs in 3,15 and 4,5. Consequently, the decreasing use of 'lhy in 3,16 could be seen as a kind of stylistic 'reduction' to avoid excessive repetitions in the context of 3,15-16. Furthermore, regarding the asyndetic construction in 3,6, reference is made to Joüon § 177o: "Généralement on met le waw devant chaque nom" (113, n. 47). In the same paragraph of this still excellent grammar, however, it is also stated: "Parfois le dernier nom seul a le waw". Moreover, the *kai* before "God of Isaac" in LXX may have a textual basis. In conclusion, it appears that G. Fischer's literary interpretation of the alliteration in Exod 3-4 rather strains the text in view of the narratological analysis.

At various places in Ch.3 the author's comments sound rather far-fetched, especially when he gives what seems to be a more or less historical reflection (cf. 114, n. 51; 145, bottom; 177, n. 216; 188, bottom and n. 247; 191-192). In dealing with *yr' mhbyt 'l h'lhym* (3,6), it is said that Num 12,8 reports that Moses *tmnt yhw h ybyt*. G. Fischer then comments:

“Sollte tatsächlich Num 12 mit unserer Stelle zu verbinden sein, würde das voraussetzen, daß Mose Gott bereits angeblickt hat — was insofern möglich ist, als v6b auch als Furcht vor weiterem Anblicken interpretiert werden kann” (114). A similar strange historicizing approach to the data of the text is found with respect to 4,10: “Sicher aber läßt sich sagen, daß die von Mose behauptete doppelte Ungeschicklichkeit (mit Mund und Zunge) in keinem Verhältnis zu seinem tatsächlichen Redenkönnen steht” (191). Taking into account the recent thoroughgoing historiographical debates in the field of biblical studies (see, e.g., N.P. Lemche, J.M. Miller, J.H. Hayes, J.A. Soggin), one should be very cautious about saying anything about the earliest history of Ancient Israel. As far as Moses and the beginnings of Israel are concerned, I would like to apply a statement made in the outstanding study by J.M. Miller and J.H. Hayes: “This is one of those places where the historian must be willing to concede that anything said is largely guesswork” (*A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* [1986] 78).

Against the analytic approach in Chapters 2 and 3, the last chapter of the book approaches the pericope from a more synthetic viewpoint, in that it aims at making manifest “die Zusammenhänge der einzelnen Elemente unter dem Gesichtspunkt ihrer gemeinsamen Aussage” (205). More particularly, the focus of this chapter is on three items. The author compares Exod 3–4 with corresponding texts concentrating on the representation of Yahweh in the book of Genesis, as well as on other ‘Call Narratives’ in the Old Testament (§2), and analyses the images of Yahweh and Moses presented in the pericope (§3). The main section (§1) of the chapter, however, is devoted to the study of literary conventions (*literarische Konventionen*) in Exod 3–4, i.e. patterns or ‘type-scenes’ that contain a set of elements which shape the narrative into a typical story (on this, see J.L. Ska, *Analysis of Hebrew Narratives*, 36–38). G. Fischer distinguishes three patterns, namely, ‘institution report’ (*Einsetzungsbericht*), ‘origins narrative’ (*Erzählung vom Anfang*), and ‘visible word’ (*Sichtbares Wort*). The first type is taken from New Testament studies and particularly related to the well-known synoptic and Pauline texts on the institution of Christian Eucharist. G. Fischer argues that the conventional plot of ‘institution’ originated in Old Testament literature, where it is manifest in Genesis (cf. 9,8–17 and 17,9–14) and Exodus (cf. 3,15 and 31,12–17, as well as 12,14 and 12,17) (207). He mentions two key motifs occurring in this type of literature: the ‘covenant’ (*Bund*) and the ‘sign’ (*wt*). The question arises, however, whether his interpretation of *bryt* as *Bund* is a correct one, for in Gen 9 and 17 the word rather means ‘promise’ (on the debate regarding the meaning of *bryt*, see e.g., J. Barr, “Some Semantic Notes on the Covenant”, in *FS. W. Zimmerli* [Göttingen 1977] 23–38). Moreover, even though G. Fischer weakens the absence of both *bryt* and *wt* in Exod 3,15, this very fact casts doubt on its character as an *Einsetzungsbericht*.

G. Fischer has also added bibliographical references, and indexes of texts, authors and subjects which prove to be very helpful. The bibliography is extensive and runs through 1987. The list should be supplemented with the commentaries written by C. Houtman (Part I [Kampen

1986]) and G.I. Durham (Waco, Texas 1987). With respect to the narratological approach to Pentateuch texts, reference can now be made to a very recent study by H.C. White (*Narration and Discourse in the Book of Genesis* [Cambridge 1991]). Regarding W. Schneider's *Grammatik* (first edition: 1974!), a slightly revised edition appeared in 1982. R. Smend published a thoroughly revised edition of his *Entstehung* [1978] in 1984. Finally, the Dutch commentary of G. te Stroete (248) appeared neither in the series *Commentar über den Pentateuch* nor in Halle in 1802, but is part of the series *De boeken van het Oude Testament* (eds. A. van den Born, W. Grossouw, J. van der Ploeg) and appeared in Roermond-Maaseik in 1966.

Though G. Fischer is not really innovative in the field of a synchronic analysis of Old Testament narratives (see *inter alia* the earlier publications by J.L. Ska, J.P. Fokkelman, R. Alter, D.M. Gunn, and the commentary on the book of Exodus by Houtman and Durham) and despite some lacunae in his approach, his inquiry into Exod 3-4 is in various respects of great interest. To begin with, it is the first meticulous synchronic study of the 'Call of Moses'. After the appearance of P. Weimar's monograph (*Die Berufung des Mose: literaturwissenschaftliche Analyse von Exodus 2,23-5,5* [Göttingen 1980]; see on this J.L. Ska, *Bib* 64 [1983] 136-138), a detailed diachronic study, G. Fischer succeeds in presenting a 'narratological' approach to the final text of this narrative in its Masoretic form, without, however, abandoning the reader in a jungle of technical terms. Secondly, taking into account that among German biblical scholars, with a few exceptions (e.g., C. Hardmeier's *Texttheorie* [1978], and a Tübingen research project on the Joseph narrative in Gen 39-50 directed by H. Schweizer), synchronic *literaturwissenschaftlich* and linguistic narrative analysis is not yet very common, G. Fischer's work could contribute to its breakthrough in German-speaking circles. Thirdly, in applying narratology to biblical texts, the author continues and refines a methodological approach for which the Pontifical Biblical Institute has done pioneering work. Hence, his study certainly deserves the attention of biblical scholars.

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Gunther FLEISCHER, *Von Menschenverkäufern, Baschankühen und Rechtsverkehrern. Die Sozialkritik des Amosbuches in historisch-kritischer, sozialgeschichtlicher und archäologischer Perspektive* (Athenäums Monographien: Theologie 74). Frankfurt am Main, Athenäum, 1989. x-486 p. 16 × 23,5. DM 88,—

Guardando all'imponente materiale bibliografico su Amos raccolto da A. van der Wal (*Amos. A Classified Bibliography* [Amsterdam 31986]), e ai

numerosissimi contributi sulla critica sociale dei profeti, ci si può meravigliare che qualcuno intenda riproporre all'attenzione degli esegeti un tema già ampiamente trattato. Eppure G. Fleischer ritiene giustificata la sua dissertazione, presentata nella Facoltà di Teologia della Università di Bonn nel 1988, sotto la direzione di F. L. Hossfeld. Secondo l'A., ci sono infatti delle lacune nella letteratura precedente: manca una analisi accurata di testi precisi; e limitati sono i contributi sulla critica sociale di singoli profeti (per Amos non esiste una monografia sull'argomento); inoltre l'analisi dei passi di Amos relativi al tema è stata condotta abitualmente con un approccio sincronico, per cui si rende necessario uno studio rigoroso di critica letteraria; infine è desiderabile una ricerca esaustiva di tipo semantico attinente alla critica sociale dei profeti (e di Amos in particolare). Pur affrontando un tema, l'interesse della dissertazione è dichiaratamente di tipo storico: si intende tracciare un profilo di Amos liberando il suo scritto da ciò che è attribuibile a redattori posteriori; e si vuole collocare l'intervento profetico sullo sfondo sociale dell'epoca, senza trascurare i contributi che vengono dalle scoperte archeologiche.

I testi da analizzare — pertinenti quanto alla critica sociale — vengono scelti in base a tre criteri: menzione esplicita dei «poveri» quali vittime dell'azione ingiusta di determinati gruppi sociali (2,6-16; 4,1-3; 5,1-17; 8,4-7); presenza della terminologia della oppressione (3,9-11); descrizione della vita sociale (3,12.13-15; 6,1-7). Con un accurato studio di critica letteraria, che costituisce la parte più significativa della monografia (18-263) si determina quanto debba essere ascrivito alla redazione «originale» di Amos; e si cerca anche di giustificare e di datare gli ulteriori strati letterari. In conclusione vengono ritenuti autentici: 2,6b*.7a.b.13-14; 3,12.15; 4,1-3; 5,1-2.7.10.16-17.21.22*.27; 6,1*.4.6a.8.11.12; e su tale base si procede ad una valutazione interpretativa. Un ulteriore capitolo, di natura sintetica, è consacrato alla terminologia che serve a designare in Amos le vittime della ingiustizia; si discute anche quali siano i destinatari degli oracoli e quali le norme legali a cui Amos farebbe riferimento (264-345). Nei capitoli successivi, l'A. ricerca le cause delle condizioni sociali sulle quali si appunta la critica di Amos (346-390); tratta brevemente degli apporti che vengono dalle scoperte archeologiche (391-401), e, infine, del rapporto tra profezia e politica (402-423).

Questo lavoro sarà senz'altro utile agli studiosi di Amos: la acribia nella analisi, la pacatezza di giudizio e la abbondante documentazione costituiscono, a nostro avviso, i pregi più importanti di una ricerca assai meritevole. Ci sia comunque consentito presentare alcune riserve di natura metodologica. Innanzitutto si deve constatare come l'intento della monografia sia quello di ricostruire il pensiero autentico di Amos; ora ci sembra non solo improbabile, ma francamente problematico il ritenere che il pensiero del profeta sulla giustizia sociale possa essere limitato a poco più di 20 versetti, strappati al testo attuale «come il pastore strappa dalla bocca del leone due zampe o il lobo di un orecchio». Nessuno vuole certo sostituire al rigoroso procedere scientifico una ingenua trattazione precritica; si vuole solo dire che questo tipo di approccio non è adatto a stabilire quale sia stato il vero pensiero di un autore biblico, poiché — prelevando solo ciò che è sicura-

mente autentico — si impoverisce enormemente uno scritto rendendolo inaffidabile per l'interpretazione. Sarebbe come se, di fronte ad un quadro, frutto di un pittore e della sua scuola, e più volte restaurato lungo i secoli, si volessero selezionare le poche pennellate originali, sparse magari di qua e di là, pretendendo così dare una idea esatta di ciò che ha voluto il pittore. Riteniamo sia più giusto dire che non siamo in grado di ricostruire esattamente il mondo intellettuale e spirituale di Amos, poiché esso ci è giunto inestricabilmente connesso con la sua interpretazione.

Il metodo stesso della critica letteraria è, d'altra parte, lungi dall'essere sicuro in tutti i suoi procedimenti: spesso i criteri usati producono solo congetture; ed è per questo che le opinioni si moltiplicano. Come dice l'A. stesso: «die Abundanz der Hypothesen mahnt zur Vorsicht» (31). Certo, anche altri approcci metodologici hanno aspetti problematici; tuttavia, nella critica letteraria, vi è la convinzione che il vero testo da interpretare sia di fatto solo quello «originale». Con la conseguenza che spesso una opinione (probabile o magari solo possibile) diventa decisiva per eliminare una porzione di scritto, che, giudicata secondaria, diventa impertinente quanto al messaggio.

Per uno studio tematico, ci sembra inoltre importante il concetto di «contesto», non propriamente sottolineato nel metodo storico-critico, il quale considera normale che lo scritto profetico si presenti sotto forma «frammentaria». Una identica frase può avere sensi diversi, o per lo meno sfumature particolari, a seconda della sua specifica collocazione in una unità letteraria; per questo riteniamo imprescindibile lo studio di tutto il testo del profeta. In particolare ci sembra evidente che, nel libro di Amos, si sia inteso collegare — «originalmente» e «redazionalmente» — la critica alla ingiustizia sociale con la critica al culto; ed è quindi limitativo considerare isolatamente i testi che presentano un aspetto, prescindendo dall'altro, sotto pretesto che il profeta dell'ottavo secolo avrebbe solamente «sfiorato» la questione del culto (affermazione per altro non condivisa da tutti).

Piuttosto poveri ci sono parsi i risultati a cui si giunge attraverso l'analisi dei termini designanti le vittime e gli artefici della ingiustizia sociale; e una cosa analoga si potrebbe dire anche per gli altri problemi storici discussi nella monografia. È evidente che la scarsità del materiale porta a dubitare di interpretazioni generalizzate, e costituisce una base insicura per deduzioni anche modeste. Lo stesso modo di procedere dell'A. conferma che uno studio tematico, oltre alla analisi diacronica di testi singoli, deve arricchirsi di molteplici approcci complementari, come la trattazione lessicografica, l'analisi semantica, la storia delle istituzioni, il raffronto comparativo con altri testi (biblici o extra-biblici), ecc. Ci si augura che questi complementi, oltre allo studio del testo nella sua redazione finale, possano integrare l'approccio storico-critico, aprendo l'interpretazione ad orizzonti più ampi.

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David J. A. CLINES, *Job 1-20* (Word Biblical Commentary 17).
Dallas, Word Books, Publisher, 1989. CXV-501 p. 16 × 23,5

The approaches taken by commentators to the Book of Job have changed remarkably in the last decade. At the middle of this century two approaches were dominant. One approach taken by scholars like Dhorme focused primarily on the book's great philological challenges. A few, such as Ball and Tur-Sinai, proposed so many new readings that they ended up practically rewriting the book. Recently, though, Gordis has published an outstanding philological commentary on Job. While works of this type have shed much light on words and verses in the Book of Job, they failed to unfold the meaning of pericopae, speeches, and the book as a whole. A second approach employed the tools of literary criticism to isolate the original text of Job; Baumgärtel's radical study being the most extreme example. Commentaries based on source-critical methodology like Hölscher's gave little attention to those lines judged to be secondary. Subsequent works using this approach, nevertheless, greatly increased the number of lines attributed to the ancient work. The finest commentary from this approach is Fohrer's magnificent volume. Although material he judged to be secondary is given greater attention than had been the case, this material is still presented in smaller print and with less discussion. Fortunately in the last decade commentaries have come to light that explore the meaning of the entire book. The recent commentary by Habel along with this one by Clines are splendid examples of interpreting the Book of Job as it has been received.

Clines, the producer of a new volume on Job, has written extensively on ways for reading ancient texts. In this massive volume we have the delight of seeing him skillfully apply the methods he has championed to the most challenging book in the Hebraic Scriptures with laudable results. Furthermore, this commentary is so well written that it is a fine literary piece in its own right.

Clines' hermeneutic emphasizes the reader. It is no surprise then that he tells us that he has written this commentary with many readers in view, including Hebraists, biblical theologians left of center, general readers, persons who like to pick up trifles, and enthusiasts, i.e., those in search of ideas to chew on. The format of the Word Biblical Commentary with sections on translation, notes, form/structure/setting, comment and explanation, affords Clines an opportunity to address these many audiences. He satisfies each well except perhaps the general audience. While there is no question that readers with a general outlook may find portions of this work captivating, nevertheless, they are apt to find the vast amount of detailed information foreboding.

The introduction to this volume is basic and brief. The bonus here is an extensive bibliography of fifty-two pages, which is subdivided into numerous topics for facility of use. The most intriguing part of the introduction is a look at various readings of the book: a feminist, a vegetarian, a materialist and a Christian reading. The reason for including this section is as an anticipation of the major hermeneutical thrust of the

coming decade. Clines points out that the various readers interested in the text bring to it different sets of questions, thereby opening "up a new set of significances for the book" (LVI). They have the advantage of illuminating the text in unpredictable ways. This approach allows moderns who live in a very different time and social milieu to enter into meaningful dialogue with an ancient text. Since Clines has initiated this approach, it could be expected that a look at these various ways of reading the text would be followed throughout the book, particularly in the section titled "explanation", but unfortunately that is not the case.

Because Clines' hermeneutic begins with the text as it has been received, he places virtually no emphasis on investigating the layers in a book as a result of its growth. However, given the fact that the Book of Job consists of many sections that differ in style, scope, and possibly perspective, e.g., the prologue's and the epilogue's relationship to the dialogue, the location and function of the Poem to Wisdom (chap. 28), and the place and role of both the Elihu speeches and the Yahweh speeches, a more extensive discussion of the book's structure would have been appreciated.

Clines has produced a lively, insightful translation. In working with the difficult Hebrew, his approach, when compared to that of other philologists, is very restrained. He searches for the simplest solution to difficult words and passages, rather than offering creative, but highly speculative, emendations, to produce an intelligible reading. His creativity is manifest in discovering how the words and phrases at hand may make sense in light of their immediate and broad contexts. His approach is reflected in his saying, "Despite the extreme difficulty of the Hebrew, a coherent sense may be discerned" (390). Of course, the difficulties with the current text of Job plus our limited knowledge of the nuances of its Hebrew dialect make the interpretation of many verses tentative and requires Clines to make some emendations to produce a translation. Overall he is to be commended for pushing back the walls of our ignorance with regard to the text of Job.

Clines informs us that as he wrote this commentary, he continually weighed fifteen English translations to help guide the selection of the materials to include, particularly in the notes, so that he could provide the non-Hebraist some understanding of the wide variety of readings in these English translations. He goes beyond merely citing proposed readings to evaluate them. Nevertheless, because of the volume and the conjectural nature of many proposed readings, he has to concede that there is not a lot to be said about some of them. For instance in one place he writes, "This conjectural emendation ... has not a chance of being what the poet wrote".

In the section entitled "form/structure/setting" Clines presents a wealth of information on the nature and scope of each speech. This section begins with a presentation of the strophic pattern of the speech. Then Clines enters into discussion with the pattern proposed by a variety of scholars. Next, he identifies the elements of form, discusses the use of the major genres, describes the function of the speech and its tonality, and picks out the *nodal verse*. The identification of the *nodal verse* is a valuable

contribution, for frequently one or two verses bear the weight of a speech, but few commentators ever identify these verses. This material in form/structure/setting offers a detailed guide for interpreting the speech. The only thing sometimes lacking is a more detailed unfolding of the speech's structure and the way that structure shapes the meaning of the speech.

In the "comment" section Clines fulfills his promises to interpret each word and strophe in light of its literary setting both in a strophe and in the book as a whole. He accepts the material as it presents itself with all of its problems. He carefully lays text on top of text as he searches for the particular meaning of the passage at hand. Frequently he discusses several verses together in order to get a general sense of the passage before going into detailed discussion on each verse. Whenever applicable he sets the interpretation of a point or a theme within its trajectory within the book. Often he will review how a theme or word has played in order to establish reference points for interpreting the text at hand. With this orientation he proceeds to interpret individual lines in light of the constraints of both the immediate and the broad context. Using this approach, Clines escapes the perversions to which verse-by-verse commentaries are prone and produces a holistic reading of the book. Readers will be pleased with Clines' undaunted honesty in handling the text.

Regarding the interpretation of key words, which has been the focus of many commentators on Job, Clines applies the principles of word study that have been refined by the work of scholars like Barr and Thiselton. Instead of presenting an extensive discussion of a particular word, he pinpoints the meaning of a word in its present context, for he realizes that the accurate meaning of a word is its sense that contributes least to its immediate context (see Nida).

A major and outstanding contribution of this commentary is the elucidation of "the rain of metaphor". Clines does not become troubled either by their number or by their juxtaposition. Diligently he strives to uncover the precise idea being communicated by each metaphor. He refuses to slavishly seek a concrete explanation as the basis for the image. For example, in interpreting Job's lament that he "has sewed sackcloth to [his] skin" (16,15), many commentators futilely endeavor to figure out the type of stitching used for the sackcloth and the size of the garment, but Clines correctly surmises that this language is purely metaphorical. In another example he takes the pictures of "my bones hang from my skin and my flesh; I am left only with the skin of my teeth" (19,20) not as physical descriptions of Job's illness, but primarily as "metaphorical of a psychic reality" (451).

Another strength of Clines' interpretation is his skillful care in establishing the exact meaning of a text. For example on 17,12 he says, "Job does not upbraid the friends for encouraging him, but only for failing to recognize his innocence" (398). At 17,11 he discerns that Job is not so debilitated by his depression as to give up caring about anything (398).

In the section entitled "explanation", Clines stands back from the text to get a glimpse of the whole argument of the speech. At this point he presents the flow of the passage and offers his response to it. Clines points

out that this is a crucial step in interpreting the book of Job since it sets forth many ideas in conflict with each other, thus forcing the reader to make evaluations (xxxii). Clines' discussion here inspires one to ponder the great issues raised by each speech. The unexpected brevity of the explanations for the speeches in chaps 4–10, however, is bewildering. These speeches are rich and worthy of more reflection. Then, amazingly, the extent of the explanation becomes fuller and more provocative at Zophar's first speech, even though Zophar is the comforter whose arguments are so sterile that he is unable to offer a third speech.

Throughout "comment" and certainly in "explanation", moreover, Clines' precision in detailed exegesis is complemented by his clear description of the broad vistas found in the Book of Job. Two key vistas are worthy of being pointed out. First, Clines astutely discovers that Job's opening lament (chap. 3), one of the highest achievements of the poet, sets the stage for the dialogue. In this speech "we are invited to view the man Job in the violence of his grief" (104). Job unloads his deepest, darkest feelings, without any reference to theodicy, to whether his suffering is deserved or not, or to the central doctrine of retribution. Surprisingly Job does not blame God or hold him responsible for his wretched condition. Clines perceives that Job's deepest anger resides not in the excruciating pain caused by his affliction or the disgust that his fate arouses in him, but in his disorientation both to morality and to God. Because the approach Job takes here so overwhelms the three comforters, they will fail to fulfill their role as comforters. Furthermore, Clines perceptively alerts contemporary readers that it is essential that they hear this speech, for unless they encounter this outpouring of Job's soul, they will lose the right to listen to the debates. He goes on to point out that this speech keeps modern interpreters from overintellectualizing this work, a gnawing temptation given its amazing blend of difficulties and wonders. The only lack in Clines' insightful interpretation of chapter 3 is a greater appreciation for Fishbane's identification of the speech as a "counter-cosmic incantation".

Second, Clines correctly sees that the speech in chaps 12–14 is the turning point in Job's approach to his suffering. He recognizes that "it ... lays down a marker for the future development of the plot of the work as a whole" (337). By resolving to take his case up with God, Job is able to continue to cope with his suffering, entertain a flickering hope amidst the deep darkness of his despair, and direct his thinking to handle the pain of the present. In Clines' judgment, Job thus "seeks the triumph, certainly not of God, and not even of himself, but of truth" (337).

One of the major interpretative challenges presented by the Book of Job is the identity of the kinsman-redeemer or champion in whom Job has faith (19,25–26). The traditional interpretation has been that the redeemer is God, but a host of scholars, including Ringgren and Habel, have reasoned that it is inconceivable that in a legal controversy with God that God himself would function as the defendant's vindicator or attorney against himself. Accepting this argument, Clines posits the creative interpretation that Job's "champion" is "his cry". Clines says, "Only his cry, uttered in the direction of God, speaks on his behalf" (459). He concludes that Job

objectifies his cry so that it may dwell in heaven where it will have a better prospect of encountering God and where it will continue to plead his case if he expires before his vindication as he fears (460). The advantage of Clines' interpretation is that it fits well with the direction of Job's plan to take his case to the heavenly court (chap. 13). Nevertheless, some arguments for the traditional interpretation may be marshalled: 1) the theme of "the living kinsman-redeemer" in the theological tradition, 2) the author's use of paradoxes, and 3) Job's experience of God.

First, most scholars, including Clines, hold that Job has in mind a heavenly redeemer *gô'el* since he has lamented that all earthly candidates for acting as his *gô'el*, both his relatives and closest companions, have forsaken him. Who then does Job have in mind? Some have proposed that this *gô'el* is a heavenly mediator other than God. Unfortunately for these scholars their proposals are left hanging in the air, for no such mediator appears. Rather, Job is referring to the great tradition that praises God as Israel's *gô'el*. This identification finds support from the linguistic affinities between Job and Deutero-Isaiah (cf. S. Terrien, *Volume du Congrès de Genève* [VTS 15; Leiden 1966] 295-310), for Deutero-Isaiah relishes the imagery of God, the *gô'el*. To *gô'el* the poet adds the adjective *hay* "living". Thereby he does two things. First, he underscores the contrast between Job's ephemeral wish that his testimony be engraved in cold, lifeless stone and the actual existence of a personal defender. Second, in that this adjective is sometimes used to modify one of the names of God in the Israelite tradition (e.g., Jer 10,10; 23,36), he solidifies the identification of the *gô'el* as God. The presence of this adjective *hay*, contrariwise, is a significant difficulty to Clines' proposal.

Second, the interpretation that Job believes God is his *gô'el* creates a paradox in that God must support Job against himself. This paradox is formidable, but is it too formidable to be proposed by the Joban poet? Possibly not, for he has a proclivity to probe paradoxes that humans find disconcerting and intriguing. Two examples are close to the same level as this one. 1) In the prologue, after Yahweh, the protector of Job, has become Job's afflictor, he admits to the Satan that he has stricken Job for "no cause" (2,3). This concession by Yahweh is a great paradox: Yahweh, the source of purpose, concedes that he has been urged to act without purpose in allowing his faithful servant to be afflicted. 2) In 27,1-6 Job solemnly swears to his innocence by God and in that oath he brazenly accuses God of taking away his right and making his soul bitter (cf. 17,3). These examples show that the paradox inherent in Job's affirmation of hope in God as his *gô'el* is not too hard for this author.

Let us reflect on this issue a little more. In response to spending time with this great book, Clines sagaciously says, "Job represents the vitality of the human spirit which refuses to be humiliated, not even by God, and especially not by theologians" (xii). This is a cardinal statement. Nevertheless, one reason that this truth shines so brightly is that God himself is wholeheartedly and undauntedly committed to Job, both the Job of piety and the Job of caustic laments. Thus the portrait of God in this book is also most invigorating, refusing to be robbed by interpreters.

Third, the argument that it would be uncharacteristic for Job, who has so boldly and passionately cried out against God as his foe, to take hope in God's acting as his *gô'el* overlooks the reality that one who faces a terminal illness experiences frenzied emotional ups and downs. More importantly, both of these views of God are rooted in Job's experience. In the present Job agonizes over his fear that God has afflicted him, though in the past he savored God's presence as a lamp shining on his head (29,2-5a). That this terrible fate has shaken Job to the core does not mean that it has obliterated his past experiences with God from his memory. By lamenting so forcefully, Job gains some moments of mental tranquility, allowing his mind to construct a way to come to grip with his plight, i.e., his plan to make an appeal to the heavenly court for vindication. For this plan to succeed he comes to realize that he will need a witness, an advocate, a *gô'el* to testify on his behalf (16,19-20; 19,25). Profoundly aware that no one on earth will serve him in this capacity, he valiantly expresses confidence that God, his former intimate companion, will fill this gap and come to his defense.

To discount further the proposed alternative identities of Job's *gô'el*, it may be argued that the claim that Job, the most pious person of antiquity, could only think of God as his opponent through some ten speeches after a faithful lifetime of devotion mocks the courage of Job's search for vindication. That Job is able to rise above his agony for a few moments to express hope in his vindication and trust in a heavenly defender, even though he cannot sustain that hope or that trust before the agony of his plight, humanizes the once wealthy and scrupulous Job and allows him to become an inspiration for all who in the midst of anger and despair wish to argue their case with God.

Notwithstanding disagreement on this last point, this commentary by Clines is a stellar work, indeed the finest commentary to date on the Book of Job. We wish Clines Godspeed in producing the much looked for second volume.

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Bernd Jørg DIEBNER – Rodolphe KASSER (Hrsg.), *Hamburger Papyrus Bil. 1. Die Alttestamentlichen Texte des Papyrus Bilinguis 1. der Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg. Canticum Canticorum (Coptice) – Lamentationes Ieremiae (Coptice) – Ecclesiastes (Graece et coptice) (Cahiers d'Orientalisme 18)*. Genève, P. Cramer, 1989. 532pp. 53 plates. 21 × 30

The publication of the volume under review has been awaited for a long time. In 1927, the Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg acquired a papyrus codex inscribed with the Acts of Paul in Greek, the Song of Songs

and Lamentations in a form of the Fayyumic dialect of Coptic, and Ecclesiastes in both languages. The *Acta Pauli* were published by C. Schmidt and W. Schubart in 1936; the rest of the manuscript has not been edited until now.

The Coptic texts in the codex are of particular interest, in view of their early date (3rd-4th century), their many unusual dialectical features, and their value as witnesses of a distinctive Fayyumic version of certain books of the Old Testament. Fortunately, their contents have been known, at least in part, for some time. Through the generosity of those entrusted with their publication, transcripts of the Coptic texts have been made available to various scholars over the years. Thus W.E. Crum was able to cite them in his *Coptic Dictionary* (1939), as were R. Kasser in his *Compléments au dictionnaire copte de Crum* (1964) and P.E. Kahle in the first volume of his *Bala'izah* (1954). However, such isolated citations, useful as they are, have been an unsatisfactory substitute for a integral edition of the texts themselves.

Such an edition is now at hand in the volume under review. The book opens with an account of the vicissitudes which have delayed its publication over the years. There follows a description of the codex and its contents, with remarks on palaeography, orthography and punctuation. Special attention is devoted to the Greek version of Ecclesiastes, its peculiarities, grammatical and otherwise, and its relation both to the other textual witnesses in that language and to the Coptic version immediately following it in the codex. The latter is sufficiently different as to preclude its having been translated from the Greek text that precedes it.

The next major section of the book is devoted to questions of Coptic dialectology. This is the work of Kasser, who begins with a detailed reconsideration of the vexed problem of how to classify the various dialects and subdialects used in the Fayyum and Middle Egypt. He proposes a new scheme of classification, then goes on to describe the most significant dialectical features of the Coptic texts in the Hamburg codex, before attempting to establish their position within the scheme that he advocates. According to Kasser, the codex is written in a subdialect of standard Fayyumic, most probably originating in the extreme northeastern part of the Fayyum. This is in contrast to the views of earlier commentators, who preferred to think in terms of an archaic form of standard Fayyumic rather than a regional variant of it. The ideas advanced in this section of the book are very much of a piece with those put forward in Kasser's previous publications on Coptic dialectology. Many regard those ideas with a good deal of scepticism, and I suspect that much of what is propounded here will evoke a similar reaction. It should be stressed, however, that even if one rejects Kasser's analysis of the dialect of these texts and its relationship to the other Coptic dialects identified by him, his detailed description of the language of the codex can still be used with profit.

The next part of the volume contains the edition proper. The format employed for the Coptic texts is as follows. A section of the Coptic is printed in the upper half of each left-hand page, accompanied by brief textual notes. The corresponding part of the translation is printed

immediately opposite, in the upper half of the facing page. The bottom half of each left-hand page reproduces such parallels as exist in other Coptic dialects, while opposite these is printed the corresponding part of the Septuagint as it appears in Swete's edition. In the case of the Greek Ecclesiastes, the version of the Hamburg codex is given without translation and the evidence of the other textual witnesses is reported in the apparatus. This is a very satisfactory arrangement, which makes the edition an easy one to use.

The texts of the codex contain many lacunae, and one of the problems which the editors have had to confront is that of deciding how to deal with these. They have opted to provide hypothetical restorations of the lacunae wherever possible. No one will object to this decision, but it should be pointed out that in some passages the editors propose restorations which are either ungrammatical or else difficult to reconcile with the preserved portions of the text. Good examples of the former occur in Ecclesiastes (Coptic) 8,10, where the infinitive of the verb *i* 'come' should not be restored as a predicate in the bipartite conjugation, and *ibid.* 9,15, where the copula *pe* ought not to occur in conjunction with the negative perfect. Examples of the latter include Song of Songs 3,4, where a past tense main clause rather than the temporal should be restored before the words 'until I found', and Lam 4,20, where one could restore the text to read either 'in his shadow we will live' (following the Sa'idic version) or 'we will live in his shadow' (following the Bohairic), but hardly the editors' 'in his shadow we will live in it'. A dubious restoration of another sort occurs in Song of Songs 6,8, where surely 80, rather than 60, concubines should be restored.

The translations of the Coptic are accurate on the whole. Such errors as do occur are relatively minor, e.g. *panalefsi* in Ecclesiastes 5,2 means 'dreamer' not 'dream', while *petele pnouti nekatf* (*ibid.* 7,13) should be relative future, not past. Occasionally, Coptic words or phrases are omitted in the translation or, alternatively, things are introduced there which do not occur in the original. But such errors are unlikely to cause serious problems for users of the book. The task of the translators cannot have been an easy one, owing to the many lacunae in the texts before them and the extent to which the readings of these texts diverge from those of all known parallel versions.

A series of six indexes comprises the next section of the book. These record: (1) the Coptic vocabulary found in the codex; (2) the Greek words (relatively few in number) employed in its Coptic texts; (3) the proper names attested therein; (4) the names of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet as they appear in the Coptic version of Lamentations; (5) the vocabulary employed in the Septuagint versions of the Song of Songs, Lamentations and Ecclesiastes, along with the Coptic equivalents attested in the Hamburg codex and elsewhere; and (6) the French vocabulary used to translate Coptic and Greek words in the preceding indexes. French, it should be noted, is the language employed throughout this section and in that on Coptic dialectology as well. The remainder of the book, including the translations that accompany the Coptic texts themselves, is written in German. This is perfectly understandable, given the international composi-

tion of the team of editors, and in a sense it is appropriate that a bilingual codex should be published in a bilingual edition. Nevertheless, I feel that it would have been preferable if the same language had been used both for the translations and in the indexes.

The printed portion of the volume concludes with a combined list of abbreviations and bibliography. This is followed by 53 plates containing photographic reproductions of the leaves of the Hamburg codex edited here. The plates are of excellent quality. In studying them, one comes to appreciate how difficult a task confronted the editors in their transcription and reconstruction of the texts.

All in all, this is a welcome edition of a very important codex. Those responsible deserve congratulations for having accomplished their work so successfully. The fruits of their labour will provide a sound basis for future research on the codex. Praise is due as well to the printer and publishers for the handsome appearance of this volume. It must be a source of added pride for the editors to see their work presented in such a splendid form.

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Novum Testamentum

Gerd THEISSEN, *Lokalkolorit und Zeitgeschichte in den Evangelien. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition* (Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus 8). Freiburg/Schweiz, Universitätsverlag – Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989. 333 p. 16 × 23,5

Those who carry on with, or are seriously interested in, the continuing quest for the historical Jesus will eagerly welcome this book, a sophisticated and stimulating collection of studies (some of them previously published) which amounts to a partial history of the synoptic tradition.

While conceding that the form-critical method, as typically practised, has not been without its defects (for instance, the incoherence of the gospels as they stand has often been exaggerated), Theissen commences by arguing that form criticism is correct concerning three fundamental points: the Jesus tradition began as an oral tradition, it grew as smaller units (sayings and stories) were combined into larger units (such as the little apocalypse behind Mark 13), and both smaller and larger units can sometimes be evaluated as to their date and local origin. It is this last proposition in particular which Theissen pursues at length in *Lokalkolorit und Zeitgeschichte*, the main goal of which is to ask and answer such questions as: Was there a Jesus tradition in Galilee? If so, who transmitted it? Did it circulate as early as the 30s and 40s? Do portions of the tradition demand a non-Palestinian environment? Did Caligula's threat against the Jerusalem

temple in AD 40 leave any mark upon the tradition? And, finally, after these and other questions have been explored, what generalizations may we make about the form of the early Jesus tradition?

In a field as well-ploughed as this one, new ground is seldom broken. Happily, Theissen is the exception: he does have novel observations to make. Consider his discussion of the pre-Markan passion narrative. After urging, on the basis of Mark's apparent preservation of two different passion-week chronologies (see the commentaries on Mark 14,1-2) and significant agreements between John and the synoptics, that Mark inherited a passion narrative which began at least with 14,1, Theissen attempts to pin down the origins of that narrative. Among his contentions are the following:

(a) Pilate is named but his office is not given (Mark 15,1, etc.). Caiaphas, by contrast, is not named: only his office (high priest) is given (Mark 15,60, etc.). Why the difference? Pilate is a name instead of an office because there was no desire to discredit Rome or her institutions. Only one man was being implicated, one whose reputation was otherwise already blemished. A time of relatively good relations between the church and Rome is thus indicated. Matters are otherwise with the high priest. His being an office instead of a name reflects continuing conflict between Christians and a Jewish institution — which fits a setting in pre-70 Jerusalem. Moreover, given that Caiaphas' family remained prominent and powerful until the fall of Jerusalem, it may not have been politic for people in or around the capital to compose a narrative which named him as a villain.

(b) Simon of Cyrene and a certain Mary are specified not by the names of their fathers (as we would expect) but by the names of their children — Alexander and Rufus on the one hand and James the lesser and Joses on the other (Mark 15,21.40). So the sons must have been better known than the parents. This probably points to the generation living c. AD 40-70.

(c) A certain James is designated "the lesser" (Mark 15,40). The need for such a nickname would have existed in pre-70 Jerusalem, which had more than one prominent James. James the son of Zebedee was beheaded there (Acts 12,2), and James the brother of the Lord was for a time Jerusalem's dominant figure.

(d) The passion narrative refers to people as being from Nazareth (14,67), from Magdala (15,40), and from Arimathea (15,43). Such references presuppose an audience's knowledge of these relatively obscure places. Would such an audience have existed anywhere but in Palestine?

(e) It was customary in antiquity for a man or a woman to be identified by the formula, proper name + name of father. But in the passion narrative no one is so identified. This hints at a setting in which the fathers were not known and where families were not intact. We know that in Jerusalem the Christian community consisted of people gathered from many places, many of whom had made radical breaks with their families.

(f) The bystander who cut off the ear of the high priest's servant (Mark 14,47) and the naked young man (14,51-52) are not named. Their

relationship to Jesus — were they disciples? — is not even made clear. According to Theissen, we may presume that while the Christian community knew their identity, it was not safe to name them. Why? Both — or were they one and the same? — had come into conflict with the authorities and yet escaped. Further, as long as the man whose ear had been severed or his friends were alive, the sword-bearer's identity was best kept secret, at least if he lived in Jerusalem.

(g) Mark 14,57-58 attributes the prophecy of the destruction and rebuilding of the temple to false witnesses. This implies that the text comes from the period before 70, when the temple was not yet destroyed, for only then would there have been need to distance Jesus from such a prophecy.

Considerations such as those just listed do, I think, make it reasonable, once the existence of a pre-Markan passion narrative is granted, to place that narrative in pre-70 Jerusalem. But Theissen wants to go further and suggest composition in the 40s. His reasons are less satisfactory. One of them is this: there are links between Mark 14,32-42 (Gethsemane) and Mark 10,35-45 (the dispute over greatness). Both involve the sons of Zebedee and both apply the cup metaphor to martyrdom. Both pericopae, Theissen infers, were formulated in the same community; and since James was martyred in the reign of Agrippa I (Acts 12,2), and since Mark 10,35-45 prophesies his death, one may suppose that both stories were formulated in the 40s: at that time Christian martyrdom was spoken of as drinking from a cup. But whether the prophecy of martyrdom for James and John is *ex eventu* has been much discussed, in part because there is evidence that John lived on; so one could argue that Mark 10,35-45 was formulated before James' execution, in which case Theissen's logic would seem to indicate a date for the passion narrative in the 30s.

Theissen may nevertheless be right in his dating. His contention that while the Sanhedrin could not have handed down a death sentence in Pilate's day, things may have been different during the tenure of Agrippa I (41-44), has a measure of plausibility. Beyond that, there is 1 Cor 11,23-25, where Paul introduces the narrative of the Lord's Supper with "in the night on which he was betrayed". Does this not clearly reveal an awareness of the circumstances surrounding the Last Supper? "Betrayed" has reference to the betrayal by Judas, and "in the night" is nothing but an historical notice. That Paul, writing in the early 50s, knew the setting of the Lord's Supper strongly implies that he was acquainted with some sort of passion narrative, which would then have to date from at least the 40s.

In addition to dating collections of sayings and extended narratives, Theissen also attempts to date individual sayings. Thus the first part of chapter 1 examines Matt 11,7 = Luke 7,24: "What did you go out into the wilderness to behold? A reed shaken by the wind?" Theissen demonstrates that Herod Antipas used the reed on his coins and that it was a symbol of his reign. He then contends that Matt 11,7 alludes to Herod, the opponent of John the Baptist, as a shaking reed. Such an interpretation also works for 11,8 = Luke 7,25: "Why then did you go out? To see a man clothed in soft raiment? Behold those who wear soft raiment are in kings' houses". Herod dressed in fancy clothes and lived in the houses of kings. Moreover,

given Herod's inconstant character, it is not unlikely that he was known as the "shaking reed". If all this is correct, then Matt 11,7 must have been composed in Palestine, where Herod's coins circulated. More specifically, we must think of Antipas' territory. Further, the unexpected combination of "reeds" and "wilderness" fits the southern Jordan river; Antipas' coins with reeds were in circulation in the 20s, and the saying need not be dated after the death of the Baptist (cf. the synoptic's placement of the story). Hence an origin with Jesus is probable.

Theissen may be right. But he has offered us only an exegetical possibility, not a probability. He has not established that Antipas was in fact known as a "shaking reed", only that the reed was his symbol. The problem is that we do not know the immediate context in which Jesus' words were spoken. If instead of a written text we had an audio-video tape, on which we could see and hear Jesus holding up a coin of Antipas while uttering Matt 11,7, the case would be closed. We do not, however, have such a tape; and we can imagine some other context which would lead to quite a different interpretation. "What did you go out into the wilderness to behold?" echoes Matt 24,15: "If they say to you, Behold, he is in the wilderness, do not go out". Now this last has to do with false prophets and false messiahs, and the verse reminds one of certain prophetic pretenders discussed by Josephus, such as the so-called Egyptian, who thought of himself as destined to rule and who led his followers on a new exodus trek through the desert: *Bell* 2,261-63. Could Matt 11,7 have anything to do with such people? Royal attire ("those who wear soft raiment are in kings' houses") could readily be linked with messianic expectation. What of the reed? Could it be an exodus motif? *Kalamos* might be a collective (cf. LXX Job 40,16), and the image of reeds blown by the wind could recall Exod 14-15, where God sends forth a strong wind to drive back the Sea of Reeds (*Sûp*). I shall not pursue this suggestion (which Theissen does not mention) any further here. The point is simply that if we knew, let us say, that Jesus' words about going into the wilderness were spoken in the midst of a discussion about messianic pretenders, then an interpretation other than Theissen's might commend itself. But we do not know and can never know; we can only guess.

A third and final illustration of Theissen's method: Q recounted three temptations, to turn stones into bread, to jump off the temple, to worship Satan (Matt 4,1-11 par.). The first two temptations may be linked with Mark's temptation narrative, where Jesus fasts (this implies hunger) and is served by angels (Matthew and Luke quote Ps 91,11: "He will give his angels charge of you"). Only the temptation to worship Satan has no parallel at all. Whence did it come? The third temptation involves three elements: prostration before the ruler of the earth, the claim to universal authority, the conflict with the worship of God. For Theissen, these three elements have as their background events during the reign of Gaius Caligula. It was Caligula who introduced *proskynēsis* into his ceremonies, and it was Caligula, the ruler of the world, who ordered an effigy of himself to be set up in the Jerusalem temple. The third temptation then reflects the tribulations of Caligula's reign, when Jews chose between idolatry and the God of Israel.

Although, in Rev 13, *proskynēsis* before Satan does seem to be connected with emperor worship, I have doubts about Theissen's proposal, this because it is not at all necessary to refer to Caligula in accounting for Q's last temptation. The Q narrative is much indebted to Deut 6-8. Deut 8,3 is quoted in 4,4, Deut 6,16 in 4,17, and Deut 6,13 in 4,10. Clearly we have to do with a haggadic tale much informed by Scripture: as Israel entered the desert to suffer a time of testing, so too Jesus, whose forty days is the typological equivalent of Israel's forty years of wandering. Just as Israel was tempted by hunger (Exod 16,2-8), was tempted to put God to the test (Exod 17,1-3; cf. Deut 6,16), and was tempted to idolatry (Exod 32), so too Jesus. On this analysis, the temptation to worship the devil is the typological correlate of the making of the golden calf: the people worshipped (Exod 32,8 — *prosekekynekasin autō*) a false god while Moses was on the mountain, and in like manner Jesus, while on a mountain, was tempted to worship Satan. The parallel is not exact but it is close enough. An idol was a god, and gods were demons, so idolatry was demon worship (cf. Deut 32,17; Ps 106,37-38; 1 En 99,7). Further, idolatry was sometimes represented as Satan worship. Thus in 2 Kings 21 Manasseh commits idolatry, and *Asc Isa* 2,1-7 equates that idolatry with worship of Satan. Note also that according to *Pirke R. Eliezer* 45 Samma'el was in the golden calf, and that when a temple of idols is destroyed in the *Testament of Job*, Satan soon appears to avenge himself (*T Job* 2-6). Moreover, the notion of Satan's universal rule need not be connected with Roman sovereignty. That Satan was "the ruler of this world" (John 12,31) or "the god of this world" (2 Cor 4,4) was common conviction. In short, then, Theissen's attempt to associate Q's temptation narrative with Caligula's reign is not necessary. The haggadic imagination could have produced the third temptation if Caligula had never existed: the literary history does not need to be correlated with an external political history.

The sad fact is that our knowledge about Jesus of Nazareth and the early traditions about him is frustratingly circumscribed. How we would like to know more! Unfortunately, our desire for more knowledge can become excessive, so that we divine in the extant sources more than is truly there. Sometimes we (and here I include Theissen) think we know too much, more than can be known. At the same time, sometimes the historian, like the detective, can indeed draw large yet sound conclusions on the basis of scanty evidence — evidence whose significance has been missed by other eyes. Of this fact Theissen is as good a proof as any. He, unlike Sherlock Holmes, is far from infallible. But he is a clever scholar, one who often sees things the rest of us do not, and the pleasure of reading Theissen I have found to be akin to the pleasure of reading Conan Doyle, for it is the pleasure of seeing the scattered pieces of a difficult puzzle fall into place. Thus *Lokalkolorit und Zeitgeschichte* is filled with novel insights and provocative suggestions, most worth pursuing. Certainly the book should be translated into English.

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Timothy J. GEDDERT, *Watchwords. Mark 13 in Markan Eschatology* (JSNT Supplement Series 26). Sheffield, Sheffield Academic Press, 1989. 352 p. 14,5 × 22. £25.00 – \$37.50

Mark is *not* a clumsy writer, and Geddert seems to take personal offense at any suggestion that he was. On the contrary, it is the thesis of this revised dissertation that Mark modeled his work on the gospel of Jesus, who also taught with great subtlety. Also G's argument is very subtle, and he devotes the first two-thirds of his work to a discussion of the gospel apart from Mark 13, the goal which he approaches very indirectly.

The argument begins with the observation that there are two words in the Marcan vocabulary that can both be translated as "watch", the "watchwords" of the title: βλέπω, which appears only up to Mark 13,33, and γρηγορέω, which appears only after that point. βλέπω is seen to be a code word calling for "correct discernment", while γρηγορέω is a code word for "faithful discipleship" in the time before the parousia. Whether or not this distinction seems plausible, it does lead to some important insights.

It is helpful to be reminded of how Mark often insists that it is very important for the reader to understand something without informing us of what the something is. It is even more helpful when G. corrects Wrede by arguing that it is not so much a matter of a Messianic secret but rather the secret kingdom of God. The Marcan Jesus does refuse to give signs in the sense of proof and calls rather for discerning the secret kingdom, whether or not this should be called an interest in epistemology.

R.H. Lightfoot noted some time ago the correlation between the doorkeeper parable (13,33-37) and the Gethsemane scene (14,32-42). Since these two passages are in fact the only places where the second "watchword" appears, G. argues that the passion narrative must be understood as being mainly about discipleship, in which Jesus is presented as the model of faithful discipleship in the way of the cross. G. loves the metaphor of running laps in a faithful relay race: the baton is passed from John the Baptist to Jesus to the disciples and (in Mark 13) to the next generations. Quite ingeniously, the ending of Mark (16,7f.) sends the reader back to the beginning in Galilee (1,16), where the story is to be reread now not about Jesus but about discipleship discernment. Mark has intended his gospel to be read at least twice: as Jesus' story, 1,16–12,44; 14–16, and as the disciples' story, 1,16–13,37. What ties the two stories together is the common pattern of suffering and vindication.

When one approaches Mark 13 from the perspective of the rest of the gospel, it is possible that this chapter too is creatively subtle. Given Mark's attitude to signs elsewhere, the bulk of the chapter cannot be an answer to the question of the disciples but must rather be a rebuke of their obtuseness. The destruction of the temple is a vindication of Jesus and his call to discipleship but not a sign of the end. Faithful disciples must always be discerning in every crisis and run their laps and pass on the baton, not knowing when the race will be over. Mark is deliberately ambiguous about timing precisely in order to prevent his readers from finding anything like

an answer to the disciples' question. G. also presents a very ingenious if not ingenuous argument: the lack of scholarly consensus on Mark's apocalyptic timetable is proof that this uncertainty was intentional on the part of the author. Not only is Mark not a clumsy writer, he is also one who is never wrong.

There is much to admire in this book, especially in numerous exegetical asides which are quite suggestive, apart from the major thesis. There are also, however, some major problems. I doubt if it is sufficient to assume, with no discussion whatsoever, that the gospel was written by "John Mark, companion of both Paul and Peter". I find it difficult to understand that Jesus was very friendly to the Pharisees up to Mark 3,6, at which point they completely lost their chance to be treated as honest enquirers. Mark turns out to be much more of an advocate of a displacement theology than one would have thought: "Satan's kingdom" is "embodied particularly in the Jewish religious leaders", Jesus' death means "the ruin of the Jewish establishment", and the destruction of the Temple is God's judgment on Israel for rejecting Jesus. The story of Jesus' death is found not so much in Mark 14-15 as it is in the parable of the vineyard, where an allegorical interpretation makes it possible to maintain that it was "the Jewish religious leaders" who killed the Son. One would have expected a bit more sensitivity to such issues.

Finally, it may be that the author protests too much. Because the book is so well written, the reader is carried along by the argument almost to the end. But when the work ends with the conclusion that Mark was infallible concerning the times of the end, this reader began to get suspicious. Indeed, I have returned to a renewed appreciation of John C. Meagher, *Clumsy Construction in Mark's Gospel* (Toronto 1979). The "brilliantly ambiguous and subtle" and infallible Mark proved to be just too much and it is good to return to the old comfortable one.

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J. NOLLAND, *Luke 1-9:20* (Word Biblical Commentary 35A). Dallas, TX, Word Books, Publisher, 1989. LXVI-454 p. 16 × 23,5

Entsprechend der Konzeption, wie sie die Word-Biblical-Kommentarreihe vorsieht, ist der erste Band des Kommentars zum Lukasevangelium angelegt: Die "Introduction" ist der Behandlung der Fragen aus der Einleitungswissenschaft gewidmet (XXVII-XLVIII); dann folgen die Angaben über die wichtigste Literatur (XLIX-LXVI) und sodann die Kommentierung (1-454). Auch bei der Erschließung der Einzelabschnitte wird konsequent ein hilfreiches Schema eingehalten, das die folgenden Schritte enthält: Angabe der Spezialliteratur zum jeweiligen Textabschnitt; eigene Übersetzung des Textes; Untersuchungen zur literarischen Form, Struktur und dem "Sitz im Leben"; Erklärung der einzelnen Verse und Worte; eine zusam-

menfassende Darstellung des Hauptinhalts. Diese Schritte werden so vollzogen und die zugehörigen Kommentarabschnitte sind so übersichtlich gegliedert, daß die verschiedenen Lesergruppen je ihrem besonderen Interesse gemäß den Kommentar gut benutzen können. Während z.B. der größere Teil der Arbeitsschritte mit wissenschaftlicher Akribie durchgeführt wird und fachtheologisch orientiert ist, wird in der jeweils abschließenden "Explanation" im Hinblick auf einen größeren Leserkreis die Fachterminologie gemieden.

Der *Einleitungsteil* wird vom Autor bewußt knapp gehalten, da nach seiner Meinung umfassende Werke mit detaillierten Untersuchungen zu den Einleitungsfragen hinreichend zur Verfügung stehen. In dem von ihm dargebotenen "minimum of orientation" (xxvii) hebt er hervor, daß die neue Evangelienforschung der Tatsache Rechnung zu tragen sucht, daß die Evangelisten Theologen waren. "The evangelists were engaged in proclamation and not just reporting; their concern was so to tell the story of the historical Jesus that their readers might encounter the living Christ" (xviii). Beim Umgehen mit der Frage nach den Quellen und der Kompositionsweise des Lukas folgt N. behutsam und problembewußt im wesentlichen der Zweiquellentheorie (xxx). Als intendierte Leserschaft des Lukas nimmt N. vor allem "Gottesfürchtige" an (xxxii): Heiden, die dem Judentum nahestanden. Für die Anrede der real existierenden Widmungsperson sei aus dem gleichen Grund das Pseudonym "Theophilus" gewählt. Zu Recht sieht N. eine enge Zusammengehörigkeit zwischen dem Lukasevangelium und der Apostelgeschichte, ohne indes die Unterschiede zu vernachlässigen. "The Gospel account may have its own completeness, but Luke did not write it without having Acts already in mind" (xxxiv).

Über die Person des Lukas lasse sich vermuten, daß er zwar nicht ein Schüler des Paulus gewesen sei, wohl aber "one of many colleagues" (xxxvi), die gelegentlich mit Paulus zusammenarbeiteten. Dafür sprächen die Wir-Berichte der Apg, und es würde sich bei dieser Sicht auch die Differenz zwischen der paulinischen und lukanischen Theologie hinreichend erklären. Mir selbst erscheint indes überzeugender, daß man die Wir-Berichte als zeitgenössisches Stilmittel betrachten und auf die Annahme persönlicher Bekanntschaft zwischen Paulus und Lukas verzichten sollte (ausführlichere Begründung: A. Weiser, *Die Apostelgeschichte* [ÖTK 5/2; Gütersloh 1985] 392).

Als Abfassungszeit für das Evangelium nimmt N. die Jahre "between the late sixties and the late seventies of the first century" an (xxxix). Gegenüber dem von ihm stark gewichteten Kriterium der lukanischen "temple loyalty" haben m.E. die Aussagen in Lk 19,41-44; 21,20-24 noch mehr Gewicht. Sie setzen deutlich die Tempelzerstörung voraus.

Bei der Abgrenzung und Gliederung des im ersten Kommentarband zu behandelnden Stoffes aus Lk läßt sich N. von folgenden Gesichtspunkten leiten: Mit dem Messiasbekenntnis des Petrus Lk 9,20 ist ein Höhepunkt erreicht, und die darauf folgenden Abschnitte Lk 9,21-50 leiten über zu dem mit Lk 9,51 beginnenden "Reisebericht" (448). Es ist eine vertretbare Entscheidung, wenn N. aus diesem Grund den ersten Kommentarband auf Lk 1-9,20 begrenzt. Den Evangelientext selbst gliedert er unter inhaltlichen,

vor allem christologisch-ekklesiologischen Gesichtspunkten in acht Abschnitte (XLI-XLII): "Dedicatory Preface 1:1-4"; "The Infancy Prologue 1:5-2:52"; "Preparation for the Ministry of Jesus 3:1-4:13"; "Preaching in the Synagogues of the Jews 4:14-44"; "Making a Response to Jesus 5:1-6:16"; "A Sermon for Disciples: The Status and Demands of Being the Eschatological People of God 6:17-49"; "Something Greater than John Is Here 7:1-50"; "Itinerant Preaching with the Twelve and the Women 8:1-9:20".

Da Lukas verhältnismäßig viele Gleichnisse Jesu überliefert, ist es sinnvoll, daß N. dem Einleitungsteil seines Kommentars einen Exkurs über Trends und Ergebnisse der neueren Gleichnisforschung zugefügt hat. Er würdigt dabei in kritischer Sicht u.a. die Studien von Jülicher, Dodd, Jeremias, Klauck, Black, Brown, Wilder, Ricoeur, Funk, Via, Crossan, Perrin, Weder, Harnisch, TeSelle, Scott, Klemm, Boucher, Talbert, Ebeling, Fuchs, Güttgemanns und Goulder.

Was die *Kommentierung* betrifft, so zeigt schon die Exegese des Widmungs-Vorworts (Lk 1,1-4) eine hohe Qualität. Sowohl die Form- und Gattungsbestimmung als auch die Detail-Auslegung erfolgt sorgfältig vom Text her und in fairer Auseinandersetzung mit der Sekundärliteratur. Folgende Positionen N.'s erscheinen mir besonders bemerkenswert und zutreffend: 1. "Any direct criticism" (6) des Lukas gegenüber den Bemühungen seiner Vorgänger sei aufgrund von V.3 auszuschließen. 2. Obwohl Lukas "the role of historical evidence" hoch einschätze, handle er dennoch den christlichen Glauben nicht etwa "as a matter of historical proof" (11). 3. Trotz der zusammengehörigen Konzeption von Lk und Apg gelte doch das Widmungs-Vorwort "in the first instance to the Gospel narrative" (11). Nicht in gleicher Weise bin ich davon überzeugt, daß *κατηχήθης* und *λόγων* in V.4 "a neutral and noninstructional sense" (11) haben; denn 1 Kor 14,19; Gal 6,6 und Apg 18,25 belegen doch den Beginn eines urchristlich-technischen Gebrauchs im Neuen Testament.

Auch die Behandlung des Kindheitsevangeliums geschieht umsichtig, instruktiv und mit kritischer Würdigung der fast unüberschaubaren Literatur. N. trägt weitgehend dem urchristlichen Gestaltungsprozeß Rechnung, der sich literarisch und theologisch vor allem in bewußter Anlehnung an das Alte Testament vollzogen habe. Den lukan. Gestaltungsanteil sowie den Einfluß aus den heidnischen Umwelt und dem hellenistischen Frühjudentum schätzt er indes m.E. zu gering ein. Das wird besonders deutlich bei der Auslegung der Geburtsankündigung Jesu (Lk 1,26-38). N. hat zwar völlig Recht, daß die VV.32 und 35 eine wichtige judenchristliche Vorprägung im Röm 1,3-4 haben; aber im Geburtsankündigungstext begegnen die Aussagen doch in einer spezifisch lukan. Weiterführung. Dazu paßt auch der ganz lukan. redaktionelle Charakter der "Marienfrage" V.34, den J. Gewieß, H. Schürmann, G. Schneider u.a. überzeugend erwiesen haben. Im Umgehen mit der historischen Frage kommt N. zu dem Ergebnis: "While difficulties no doubt remain, there seems to be no adequate basis for abandoning the essential historicity of the tradition of a virginal conception of Jesus" (48). Mir scheint dieses Ergebnis den dagegen stehenden "difficulties" nicht ganz gerecht zu werden, und ihr wirkliches Gewicht erscheint

mir unterschätzt. Die sich aus der späten und schwachen Bezeugung, aus den Denkvoraussetzungen des hellenistischen Judentums (Jes 7,14 [LXX!]; Philon u.a.) und aus dem religionsgeschichtlichen Befund ergebenden Schwierigkeiten (46-48) sind m.E. von N. nicht wirklich ausgeräumt und entkräftet worden.

Innerhalb des von Lukas wohlüberlegt komponierten großen Eröffnungs-Teils seiner Evangelienschrift kommt der Szene des Auftretens Jesu in der Synagoge seines Heimatortes Nazareth programmatische Bedeutung zu. N. weiß um diese Einschätzung in der Forschung, wenn er schreibt: "Luke 4:16-30 is widely regarded as a programmatic text for Luke's whole enterprise..." (195). Er selbst legt aber auf diese Programmatik der Szene weniger Wert als auf die Herausarbeitung, daß es sich um "a concrete example of preaching in the synagogues of Galilee" (202) handle. Die Relevanz für die Bewohner von Nazareth scheint ihm wichtiger als die übergreifende Sicht, die sich für den gesamten Dienst Jesu, seine Aufnahme und Ablehnung sowie für den Weg des Evangeliums hin zu den Heiden eröffnet: "In the wider Lukan context, the blessed Gentiles adumbrate the universalism which is to be the basis of the Gentile mission... But in the flow of the immediate narrative the point is that the people of Nazareth are the losers, not that there are other potential beneficiaries" (203). Diese Sichtweise scheint mir damit zusammenzuhängen, daß sich das Gesamtkommentarwerk betont als "*Word*"-Commentary versteht, bei dem weniger die übergreifenden literarischen und theologischen Kompositionslinien als vielmehr die Erklärung der Einzelaussagen und Einzelabschnitte im Vordergrund stehen. Damit wird freilich von vornherein eine erhebliche Begrenzung für die Sinnerschließung der lukan. Aussagen in Kauf genommen. Bei der literarkritischen Beurteilung der Nazarethperikope scheint mir richtig zu sein, daß N. außer der Mk-Vorlage lukan. Ergänzungen aus anderer Überlieferung, nicht aber aus einer den "Bericht vom Anfang" enthaltenden Sonderquelle annimmt (185, 192-194). Auch viele andere literarkritische Entscheidungen verdienen m.E. Zustimmung, so z.B. die zur Perikope der Petrusberufung (Lk 5,1-11) und zu den Seligpreisungen mit den Wehrufen (Lk 6,20-26). "In the case of the first three beatitudes it seems most likely that Luke's version is the more original... Also in the fourth beatitude Luke has stayed closest to the tradition... The case of the woes is altogether more difficult to evaluate..." (280). Bei der inhaltlichen Auslegung der drei ersten Seligpreisungen setzt sich N. mit der Interpretation von J. Dupont auseinander, der "a major shift in meaning between the beatitudes on the lips of Jesus and the beatitudes in the text of Luke" empfunden habe (281). Nach Dupont hätte die Zusage der Herrschaft Gottes allen, nicht nur den Armen, gegolten; die Armen aber wurden seliggepriesen, weil ihre Situation besonders schlimm war und deshalb die verheißene Behebung ihres Unglückszustands besonders erfreulich schien. N. meint dagegen, Jesus habe nur die Armen — und zwar in Kontrast zu anderen — seliggepriesen, und Lukas habe diese Kontrastierung zutreffend bewahrt. Das "inklusive" Verständnis der Preisungen im Munde Jesu, wie Dupont es vertritt, erscheint mir zutreffend; es liegt m.E. aber auch bei Lukas vor. Richtig ist in jedem Fall, daß N. herausarbeitet, daß Jesu Verheißung wirklich Armen gilt, daß auch Hunger

und Trauer "as characteristic manifestations of poverty" (283) gelten und daß es weder bei Jesus noch bei Lukas um eine Glorifizierung der Armut, sondern um deren Behebung geht.

Im Rahmen der oben genannten bewußt vollzogenen Vorentscheidungen und der damit gegebenen Voraussetzungen, die das Konzept des gesamten "Word"-Kommentars betreffen, erweist sich der vorliegende Lk-Kommentar als ein sorgfältig und umsichtig erarbeitetes Werk, das zum Verständnis der lukan. Aussagen erheblich beizutragen vermag.

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Jerry L. SUMNEY, *Identifying Paul's Opponents*. The Question of Method in 2 Corinthians (JSNT Supplement Series 40). Sheffield, Academic Press, 1990. 256 p. 14 × 22. Cloth: \$45.00; paper: \$33.50

Cualquiera que se haya interesado alguna vez en reconstruir la situación histórica concreta que provocó a Pablo a escribir a una de sus comunidades, no albergará la menor duda de que la identificación de los detractores del apóstol en esa comunidad contribuiría de forma decisiva a la comprensión de su pensamiento. Pero quien, para entender el epistolario paulino, se ponga como tarea la reconstrucción del contexto histórico de sus cartas, ha de enfrentarse al hecho de que no se ha llegado todavía, tras siglo y medio de continua investigación, a un consenso sobre la identidad de los oponentes de Pablo en ninguna de sus cartas; y un motivo de este estado de cosas ha sido, ciertamente, que los estudiosos han dedicado más energías a proponer hipótesis nuevas que a reflexionar sobre la viabilidad y legitimidad de sus opciones metodológicas.

Consciente de que «no substantial progress can be made on the question of the identity of Paul's opponents until interpreters give serious attention to issues of method», S. se propone delinear «a sound method for identifying Paul's opponents» (10) y mostrar su validez utilizándolo en el examen de 2 Cor; su elección como campo de verificación resulta oportuna: por evidente que sea su origen apologético, no resulta tanto la identificación del frente antipaulino, sobre el que se han acumulado hasta trece hipótesis de reconstrucción. La intención del autor queda bien reflejada en el título de la obra, que es, en realidad, la revisión de una tesis doctoral presentada en la Southern Methodist University en 1987, y realizada bajo la dirección de V. P. Furnish.

El objetivo determina el procedimiento. La primera parte es de carácter informativo: el autor pasa revista a algunas de las más representativas propuestas de identificación de los antagonistas de Pablo en 2 Cor resaltando en especial las opciones de método empleadas. La segunda parte es, sin duda, la más original: tras una crítica de los procedimientos utilizados en

las hipótesis reseñadas, S. delinea los elementos del método que propugna. La tercera parte tiende a confirmar la legitimidad del método propuesto; que pueda ser aplicado a una carta paulina y sea capaz de producir una precisa hipótesis le parece al autor suficiente para darlo por bueno. El autor, que se mueve siempre dentro de los cánones de la crítica histórica, respira un optimismo digno de admiración; llega a afirmar que lo que le ha faltado a la investigación paulina ha sido un poco más de método en la identificación de los oponentes del apóstol. De ser así, con su aportación, se acabaría el problema.

Que la primera parte no ofrezca una panorámica completa de las posiciones merece reconocimiento; pero que se dividan las hipótesis de identificación, que al autor le parecen más dignas de mención, no en razón de las opciones metodológicas que utilizan sino según los resultados a los que llegaron, máxime cuando lo que aquí se desea es «only to expose *methods*» (13), es cuando menos sorprendente, por cómodo que resulte. S. somete a las hipótesis que reseña a un grilla de cuestiones, que en la práctica no van a resultar fácilmente separables y, por tanto, no son tan operativas como su simple elenco indicaría. Se pregunta, en primer lugar, sobre las fuentes en las que se basan, han de basarse, los intentos de reconstrucción de la prehistoria de las cartas paulinas, sobre su datación y relativa evidencia; sobre el papel que una reconstrucción ha de tener en la identificación de los antagonistas; si se ha de contemplar también la posibilidad de que Pablo no estuviera bien informado sobre la situación. La utilización de fuentes no primarias está al centro de un segundo núcleo de preguntas: ¿el texto a investigar es el corpus paulino o la carta en cuestión?; ¿cómo identificar válidamente los pasajes paralelos dentro o fuera del corpus paulino y cuál ha de ser considerado su legítimo uso? Por último, y ya individuados los textos primarios, a qué pasajes habrá que conceder el que posean mejor información sobre los oponentes y qué valor dar al testimonio que se induce de una negación paulina.

La sola mención de estas cuestiones hace ya entrever que el autor ha preferido imponer deductivamente una pauta, algo rígida, a su análisis de los cuatro tipos de antagonistas que elenca antes que identificar las cuestiones que en esas respuestas quedaron implicadas. ¿Es simple casualidad que resuma su análisis afirmando que «none of the positions taken (by the interpreters) on a particular issue is in accord with good historical method»? Lo que S. entiende bajo un buen método histórico ha de ser, al parecer, evidente también para sus lectores. En su crítica de las técnicas empleadas en la investigación paulina para la identificación de los oponentes, el autor asume una actitud minimalista: si es lógico que rechace el uso directo — qué entiende por «some less direct uses» (80) que también desautoriza, lo da por supuesto —, de fuentes tardías como base válida para la reconstrucción histórica, no lo es tanto que desconozca el valor ratificador, e incluso revelador, que testimonios posteriores tienen sobre situaciones previas de las que son herederos; ¿o es que la 'Wirkungsgeschichte' de un texto antiguo no ayuda a individuar motivos latentes ya en un momento dado, por más que los protagonistas no fueran todavía del todo conscientes de ello?

Tiene razón S. cuando critica que, a menudo, se haya confundido la reconstrucción del contexto histórico previo a la carta paulina con la identificación de los oponentes del apóstol: ésta ha de venir sólo del análisis de la fuente primaria; la reconstrucción del ambiente comunitario ha de considerarse provisional, por necesario que sea para la comprensión de la carta apostólica; y si es más que probable que «the opponents an author faces are unique to the situation of a particular letter, or that this letter contains the only extant references to them» (83), no es menos verosímil que, — y más en el caso de Pablo, cuyo modo partidista de tratar a sus antagonistas es de sobra conocido —, la información que ofrece la carta, único testimonio válido, sea de muy poco valor. Y ello, sin tomar demasiado en serio la posibilidad de que Pablo haya malentendido a sus oponentes: porque, aún siendo legítimo tal supuesto, tendría que basarse en la comprensión del intérprete de Pablo, correcta por supuesto, que descubriría en su testimonio la errónea comprensión de sus antagonistas por parte de Pablo, a no ser que, lo que sí sería más probable, terminara por achacarle desinformación interesada. Juzgo excelente la crítica de S. a cuantos acusan a Pablo de mal informado sobre sus antagonistas; pero me sorprende *en él* la distinción que establece entre historia y exégesis; ésta no necesitaría tanto de la reconstrucción de la situación cuanto de la percepción que Pablo se hizo de ella al escribir (cf. 86). Siendo ello evidente, ¿no invalida o, por lo menos relativiza, sus propias posiciones y el motivo de su obra («the more we know about Paul's opponents, the more we know about the historical context of his letters, and therefore, about the meaning of those letters»: 9)?

Concuerdo con S. en que lo correcto es interpretar las cartas paulinas en sí mismas así como con su postura reticente ante la utilización de los, a veces sólo supuestos, paralelos dentro del corpus paulino.

Pero donde más original aparece su aportación, y más decisiva para la identificación de los oponentes paulinos, es también donde surge la mayor perplejidad. Que se opte por ver la carta en cuestión como fuente primaria resulta lógico, dentro de la postura minimalista del autor; que distinga entre pasajes cuya referencia a los antagonistas es más o menos segura y se distinga entre el grado de certeza en la mención del oponente y el grado de fiabilidad de su contenido supone una apreciable capacidad de discernimiento y es prueba, además, de buen sentido. El problema está en pasar de este tipo de reflexiones a la elaboración de un procedimiento operativo. Y, aquí, de eso se trata. Para lograrlo S. distingue los posibles contextos donde vienen las afirmaciones que van a ayudar a identificar los oponentes: polémicos, apoloéticos, didácticos y de convención epistolar; en ellos no todas las afirmaciones tienen el mismo valor, unas son explícitas, otras alusivas, otras enunciativas. El autor da por descontado que en Pablo puede distinguirse sin mucha fatiga entre — es sólo un ejemplo — una afirmación apoloética y otra didáctica; al menos no se detiene en presentar criterio alguno; y llega a elencar cinco niveles de certeza y cuatro de fiabilidad en la referencia paulina a sus opositores, aun concediendo que no hay correlación entre ambos niveles. Por si algo no le quedara claro al lector, se le explica, p.e., que «the highest level of certainty of reference contains types of statements which quite certainly refer to opponents» (96;

el subrayado es mío) o que «the highest level of reliability is accorded types of passages in which *the author has the least reason to distort the opposition*» (96; subrayado mío). Los dos afirmaciones me parecen características del planteamiento del autor: su manifiesta capacidad para responder a todas las *posibles* cuestiones y matizar sus propias posiciones le hacen olvidarse, al parecer, de que está hablando de un escritor tan imprevisible como Pablo, de un apóstol que nunca es del todo neutral con su comunidad ni lo pretende siquiera.

Es significativo que, cuando S. discute los diversos contextos donde pueden ir las afirmaciones más o menos explícitas de los oponentes, no cite apenas a Pablo ni aluda como ejemplo a una de sus afirmaciones de su epistolario. ¿No hubiera sido más adecuado ver qué es lo que Pablo hace en sus cartas que insistir en cómo cualquier autor suele, o tiene que comportarse normalmente cuando alude, directa o indirectamente, a sus detractores? Ciertamente hubiera ilustrado mejor el procedimiento que se propone, si hubiera recurrido a una carta paulina, Gal o incluso I Cor, como ejemplo, — y no prueba legitimadora, que a ello ha dedicado el autor la tercera parte — de cuanto iba exponiendo. Que la mejor información viene de lugares donde se dice algo explícitamente de los enemigos en un contexto donde no puede sospechar interés alguno en quien lo afirma (textos didácticos y eucarísticos), es obvio; pero afirmarlo no basta, cuando se intenta proponer un método seguro para la identificación de los oponentes; lo que se hubiera esperado es la elaboración de criterios para ayuden a discernir cuándo Pablo habla explícitamente de sus antagonistas en una acción de gracias o exponiendo su doctrina. En vez de técnicas de análisis, precisas y operativas, el autor tiende a hacer reflexión hermenéutica, matizando posiciones teóricas, alguna que otra vez, del todo evidentes; como ésta, p.e.: «As a rule, affirmations (because they are more reliable) are better evidence than allusions, if the affirmations *undoubtedly* refer to opponents. But we will seldom be so certain about an affirmation» (112).

He de confesar que, puesto que alguna vez me enfrenté a la tarea de rescatar de una carta de Pablo el rostro de sus antagonistas, dí por bienvenido el intento de S. de delinear un método válido par la identificación de los oponentes del apóstol. Su mayor logro, pienso, está su punto de partida: haber mostrado cómo la investigación paulina, durante un siglo, no ha dejado de proponer hipótesis sin haberse puesto seriamente el problema del método. Y es mérito evidente el haberlo intentado él, creo, por vez primera. Aun a riesgo de equivocarme, — ¡y qué bueno sería! — no me parece que lo haya logrado; probablemente, ni se pueda: no falta sólo un buen método, faltan datos que analizar; las cartas de Pablo, que son las fuentes primarias básicas si no únicas, no nos dan suficiente información. La obra de S. puede prestar, con todo, un gran servicio, si logra hacer más cautos a quienes siguen proponiendo el contexto histórico de la correspondencia paulina como su clave de interpretación.

Por otra parte, sorprende que — y dado de lo que se trata, proponer un método para la identificación de los oponentes de Pablo según aparecen en sus cartas — no haya S. hecho alusión alguna a la personalísima forma paulina de redactar; resulta curioso que sólo aluda al análisis retórico cuan-

do discute la integridad literaria de 2 Cor (124-125). Para entender 2 Cor, tan importante como pueda ser el motivo histórico y, por ende, la identificación de los detractores del apóstol, sigue siendo el análisis de la argumentación paulina: antes que ir a buscar fuera del texto a quién se pudo referir Pablo, habría que afrontar dentro del texto su modo de escribir «um ihn gerecht zu werden» (J. Weiss, *Das Urchristentum* [Göttingen 1917] 320).

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Takashi ONUKI, *Gnosis und Stoa*. Eine Untersuchung zum Apokryphon des Johannes (Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus 9). Freiburg/Schweiz, Universitätsverlag – Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989. x-196 p. 16 × 23,5

Die Arbeit sucht die These zu begründen, daß die Bezugnahme auf die stoische Lehrtradition das gesamte Apokryphon des Johannes (AJ) durchziehe. Dieses polemisiere nicht nur gegen die stoische Erkenntnis-, Qualitäten- und Affektenlehre (Kap. 2), sondern auch gegen die Kosmologie, Psychologie, Anthropologie, Vorsehungslehre und Eschatologie der Stoiker (Kap. 3). Im Schlußkapitel sucht O. die Frage zu beantworten, wie die stoische Lehre dem Bearbeiter des Codex II des AJ (Mitte 2. Jh. n. Chr.) vermittelt worden ist. Diesem Zweck dient der Anhang über Handbücher und Exzerpte zur Popularisierung der Stoa (169-174).

Methodisch geht der Verf. aus von dem Textteil mit der stärksten Polemik, dem großen Einschub II 15,29–19,12, um nachzuweisen, daß dieser keinen Fremdkörper bildet, sondern mit der (polemischen) Absicht der Schrift im Einklang steht (Kap. 2). Die hier gewonnenen Ergebnisse werden dann verglichen mit dem Befund in den restlichen Textteilen, die sich ebenfalls von stoischen Lehren distanzieren (Kap. 3). O. faßt seine Ergebnisse am Schluß eines jeden Kapitels zusammen (vgl. bes. 53 f. für Kap. 2 und 158 ff.). Ein erster Abschnitt gilt stets dem Befund des Textes. Darauf werden die Grundzüge der jeweils in Betracht kommenden stoischen Lehrmeinungen dargestellt. Der abschließende Abschnitt arbeitet sodann die spezifisch gnostische Sinngebung im Kontrast zur stoischen Schultradition heraus. Dabei macht O. Gebrauch von Tabellen und Übersichten, durch die seine Argumentation an Durchsichtigkeit gewinnt.

Nun zu den Einzelheiten! Im koptischen Text II 17,32–18,2 stehen 5 Begriffe: (1) αἰσθησις, (2) ἀνάληψις, (3) φαντασία, (4) ein verschieden gedeutetes koptisches Wort und (5) ὁρμή. O. (9-19) sucht diese von je einem Daimon beherrschten "Begriffe" mit den 5 Erkenntnisstufen der Stoa αἰσθησις, φαντασία, συγκατάθεσις, κατάληψις und ὁρμή zu verbinden. Das koptische Wort deutet er wie Böhlig als Analogon zu συγκατάθεσις. Schwierigkeiten bereitet die geänderte Reihenfolge und die Abwandlung

von κατάληψις zu ἀνάληψις. Auch ist merkwürdig, daß gerade der stoische Begriff (συγκατάθεσις) nicht in griechischen Buchstaben im Text steht. O. glaubt hier deshalb einen "popularisierten Stoizismus" zu erkennen, dessen Erkenntnislehre mit Hilfe der beigegeführten Namen "dämonisiert" sei, denn nicht das ἡγεμονικόν des Menschen, sondern dämonische Kräfte beherrschen für den Verfasser des AJ die menschliche Erkenntnis (18 f.).

Der Text II 18,2-14 weist nach O. (19-26) eine weitgehende Parallelität zur stoischen *Qualitäten- und Mischungslehre* auf. Ὑλη, die Mutter der δαίμονες (Qualitäten), ist einerseits mit allen δαίμονες vermischt (II 18,12-13), d.h. mit allen Elementen und ihren Qualitäten verbunden, denn jedes Element ist gestaltete ὕλη (ὕλη + εἶδος). Ὑλη an sich (prima materia), ungestaltete Materie andererseits ist qualitätslos (ἄποιος). Den genuin stoischen Begriff ἄποιος sucht O. in II 18,12 nachzuweisen (25 f.). Das dort stehende koptische Epitheton der Mutter der Qualitäten darf nicht mit "unbegrenzt" (so Krause) übersetzt, sondern muß als "unbestimmt" (ἄποιος) gedeutet werden. In dem Kryptogramm ONORTHOCHRAEI (II 18,11) steckt nach O.s Meinung (25) ὀρθὴ κῤῥσις. Hier liege ein Hinweis auf die Mischung der Qualitäten vor. Aber diese Etymologie überzeugt nicht, weil die Anfangssilbe ON- (so Werner) der Negation ἀν- (Alpha privativum vor Vokal) entspricht, so daß der ganze Name als ἀνορθος κῤῥσις zu deuten wäre. In PHLOXOPHA (II 18,6 f.) andererseits steckt φλόξ bzw. φλογωπός (25). Das Ergebnis des Abschnittes (27) lautet: "Die Qualitäten- und Mischungslehre des Stoizismus wird hier degradiert und als Materialismus gebrandmarkt".

Onuki sagt richtig, daß die Mutter der Qualitäten (ὕλη) diese potentiell enthalte (23 oben, 26). Dann aber zitiert er kritiklos Plutarchs Polemik (*Mor.* 1085e-1086a), einige Stoiker versuchten den Begriff ἄποιος οὐσία mit dem Hinweis zu rechtfertigen, dieser bedeute nicht, "daß sie (sc. die prima materia) jeder Qualität beraubt ist, sondern daß sie alle Qualitäten hat (enthält)". Dies hält Plutarch für widersinnig: "denn niemand hält für qualitätslos, was keiner einzigen Qualität un-teilhaftig ist", d.h. was alle Qualitäten hat. Plutarch begeht hier aber die Bosheit, die stoische Aussage "die qualitätslose Materie enthält alle Qualitäten" als eine ἐνεργεία — statt als eine δύναμις — Aussage aufzufassen (vgl. Aristoteles, *Physik* 207a22). Mangel an Kritik führt nun O. dazu, aus Plutarchs Referat einen Gegensatz zwischen Stoikern und Peripatetikern in der Lehre über das Wesen der reinen (qualitätslosen) Materie zu konstruieren (24, Ende von 2.2.2). Die Aussage der Stoiker, potentiell enthalte die ἄποιος ὕλη alle ποιότητες, ist vielmehr identisch mit der Aussage der Peripatetiker, die ἄμορφος ὕλη sei aller εἶδη (Gestalten) beraubt (στέρησις), könne sie aber annehmen.

Daß in AJ II 18,14-19,2 von stoischen *Unterteilungen der Affekte* Gebrauch gemacht ist und diese wiederum dämonisiert werden, weist O. in 2.3 (27-53) überzeugend nach. Beeindruckend ist die Gründlichkeit, die vor allem in mehreren Tabellen über die Unterarten von λύπη, ἡδονή, ἐπιθυμία und φόβος bei Cicero, Diogenes Laertios, Ps. Andronikos und Stobaios zum Ausdruck kommt (35-38). Dabei gelingt es dem Verf., durch

Heranziehung stoischer Definitionen das griechische Äquivalent gewisser koptischer Affekt-Bezeichnungen zu finden, deren Bedeutung umstritten ist. Der Text des AJ weicht von der stoischen Lehrmeinung darin ab, daß er (II 18,32) die Affekte als zugleich nützlich und schlecht bezeichnet, während sie in der Stoa als schlechthin negativ bewertet werden. Hier offenbart sich peripatetisches Denken (49). So viel zum 2. Kapitel.

Um die Frage zu beantworten, ob die nachgewiesene Polemik des großen Einschubs gegen die Lehrtradition der Stoiker einen Fremdkörper darstellt, der der ursprünglichen Abfassungsabsicht des AJ widerspricht, untersucht O. in Kap. 3 (55-157) die gnostische Polemik gegen stoische Lehren außerhalb des großen Einschubs (vgl. 55).

3.1 handelt vom gnostischen Angriff auf die stoische *Kosmologie* (55-74). Eine zentrale Rolle spielt dabei die Aussage in II 11,7f. "er (JALDABAOTH) verteilte unter ihnen von seinem Feuer", die in II 12,4f./IV 19,3-4 wieder aufgenommen wird. Im Zusammenhang mit dem Satz II 11,8f. "er gab ihnen aber nicht von der Lichtkraft, die er von seiner Mutter empfangen hatte" erweist sich die Stelle II 11,7f. als Polemik gegen die stoische Position, die im Feuer das höchste göttliche Prinzip erblickt (vgl. BG 42,13-18/III 18,12-16 und II 12,4-5/IV 19,3-4 einerseits und II 11,7-9/IV 17,14-16 andererseits mit S. 59 bei O.). Im folgenden (60-70) arbeitet der Gelehrte die astronomischen und astrologischen Voraussetzungen des Textes heraus, um die "12 Gewalten" (II 10,26-11,4) zu identifizieren, die in 7 Könige des Himmels und 5 Könige der Unterwelt (BG 41,12-15/III 17,17-20) aufgeteilt werden müssen. Eine wichtige Rolle spielt dabei II 11,3, wo die 12. Gewalt als Herr über die Tiefe der Unterwelt bezeichnet wird. Es ergibt sich (64f.), daß die 7 oberen Gewalten JALDABAOTHS Herrscher des über dem Himmelsäquator liegenden Teils der Ekliptik sind, zu dem die 7 Abschnitte des Zodiakos von aries bis libra gehören, während die 5 unteren Gewalten über die 5 unter dem Himmelsäquator liegenden Abschnitte scorpius bis pisces herrschen (eine Zuordnung von exakt 30 Grad des Zodiakos zu je einem Tierkreiszeichen ist hier nicht vorausgesetzt). Die Einteilung des Tierkreises in eine nächtlich-winterliche untere Hälfte (libra bis pisces) und eine dem Tag zugeordnete, sommerliche Hälfte (aries bis virgo) kannte nach Boll auch die Stoa (vgl. O. 66). Vor diesem Hintergrund erweist sich der Satz II 11,7-9 "und er teilte ihnen von seinem FEUER mit, aber er gab ihnen nicht von der LICHTKRAFT, die er von seiner Mutter empfangen hatte" als polemische Spitze gegen die stoische Kosmologie und Gestirnlehre (70): Die Gestirne haben zwar Anteil am πῦρ, aber eine ihnen Göttlichkeit verleihende Lichtkraft besitzen sie nicht (vgl. Pl. *Rep.* 514b2.3.515a7).

Anhand von II 15,13-29 (Parr) untersucht O. sodann das Verhältnis des AJ zur stoischen *Psychologie* (74-91). Sehr gut arbeitet er die vollkommene Zuordnung der Psychologie zur Kosmologie in der Stoa heraus (81-84): Die Achtheilung der SEELE in die 5 Sinnesfähigkeiten und das Sprech-, Zeugungs- und Denkvermögen (ἡγεμονικόν) entspricht genau der Achtheilung des KOSMOS in die 7 Planetensphären von Mond, Sonne, Venus, Merkur, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn und die Fixsternsphäre (ἡγεμονικόν). Der Mensch ist ein Mikrokosmos.

Auch gegen diese Psychologie polemisiert das AJ, indem es den Planeten nicht wie die Stoiker die sinnlichen Wahrnehmungsfunktionen, sondern nur die körperlichen Bestandteile des Menschen (Knochen-, Sehnen-, Fleisch-, Mark-, Blut-, Haut- und Haarseele) zuordnet. Aus der Übersicht S. 88 bei O. geht hervor, daß die 7 unter dem ἡγεμονικόν stehenden Seelenteile der älteren Stoa, die dort Anteil am ψυχικόν πνεῦμα haben, degradiert werden zu niederen Funktionen, die vom niedrigeren φυσικόν πνεῦμα, das Pflanzen und Tiere ernährt und wachsen läßt, durchwaltet sind (von den Sehnen bis zum Haar des Menschen), während die Knochen nur wie leblose Dinge, etwa Steine, am ἐκτικόν πνεῦμα, das den Zusammenhalt von Materieteilen bewirkt, teilhaben (vgl. SVF II 716 nach Galen und O. 82). Da nun den 7 seelischen Substanzen, von der Knochenseele bis hinauf zur Haarseele, in II 15,13-29 die unterhalb des ἡγεμονικόν der Fixsternsphäre befindlichen 7 Planetensphären zuzuordnen sind (ebenso wie jeder Seelensubstanz eine unter JALDABAOTH stehende δὴναμις zuzuordnen ist), ergibt sich die polemische Spitze, daß entgegen der stoischen Meinung kein einziger Planet Anteil an ψυχή hat (Kosmologie) und daß sämtliche Seelensubstanzen unterhalb des stoischen ψυχικόν-Bereiches bleiben (Psychologie).

Nicht durch ψυχή wird der Mensch beweglich und erkenntnisfähig (so die Stoa und die griechische Auffassung allgemein), sondern erst durch die LICHTKRAFT der Mutter des JALDABAOTH, des obersten Herrn über den sinnlich wahrnehmbaren Bereich. Das ist das Ergebnis der Ausführungen von O. über AJ II 19,25-33 (Parr) sowie 20,33–21,14 (Parr) und die stoische *Anthropologie* (91-99). Hier stellt er ab S. 95(-99) anhand von II 20,33–21,14 die Schaffung des materiellen Körpers des Menschen dar. Benutzt ist dabei die im 2. Jh. n. Chr. stoisch bestimmte Elementenlehre, wiederum polemisch, denn in II 21,7-8 wird die Materie negativ beurteilt und nach II 21,4 auch die Mischung der Elemente, die nicht Ordnung, sondern Verwirrung hervorbringt (vgl. weiter unten zur stoischen Vorsehungslehre).

Die Analyse von II 24,32-34 (Parr) bei O. (98) scheint mir logisch nicht sauber zu sein. Der Satz lautet richtig übersetzt: "Er (sc. der Protarchon) setzte die zwei Archonten (Elôim und Jave) über die (zwei) ἀρχαί (Prinzipien), so daß (damit) sie über die Höhle (σπήλαιον) herrschen". Aus Diogenes Laertios (SVF II 299) kann der Sinn dieses Satzes gewonnen werden. Daß ἀρχαί hier mit στοιχεῖα identisch sein soll (so O. 98), ist logisch falsch (vgl. SVF II 199). Der Verfasser von II 24,32-34 wählt hier den Begriff ἀρχαί (Prinzipien, vgl. SVF IV 28, Sp. 1) zunächst um der Paronomasie ἀρχων-ἀρχή willen. Da nun die beiden ἀρχαί, das ποιοῦν (= θεός) und das πάσχον (= ὕλη), die Elemente, d.h. die Gesamtheit der Dinge, zusammenfassen, sind sie der Inbegriff des sinnlich Wahrnehmbaren, d.h. der ganze Kosmos. Wie der Kosmos die sichtbaren Dinge (Elemente) umschließt, so umfassen die beiden Prinzipien θεός und ὕλη die στοιχεῖα (= gestaltete Materie). Wer sagt, Feuer und Luft seien aktiv (δραστικά bzw. ποιοῦντα), Wasser und Erde hingegen passiv (παθητικά bzw. πάσχοντα, vgl. SVF II 418) — die Erde trägt passiv Wasser, das Wasser trägt passiv leichtere Stoffe; die Luft bewegt aktiv etwas, das Feuer verzehrt aktiv —, der meint, diese Elemente hätten Anteil an den Prinzipien

ποιοῦν und πάσχον. Die Elemente verhalten sich zu den Prinzipien wie die εἶδη (μορφαί) zu der ἄμορφος (ἄποιος) ὕλη, ihrem γένος. Ὑλὴ (θεός) als Bedingung der Möglichkeit von μορφή hat selbst nicht Anteil an μορφή (ποιότης). Der Kosmos ist folglich vorgestellt als die die 4 Elemente und die aus ihnen zusammengesetzten Dinge enthaltende, mit dem θεός identische ὕλη.

Mit dem Begriff σπήλαιον schließlich erinnert das AJ an Platons Höhle (*Rep.* VII 514 a 3.5.515 a 8.539 e 3). Denn die Höhle bei Platon ist ein Gleichnis für den ὁρατός τόπος, welcher die Gesamtheit alles Sichtbaren, d.h. die ganze sinnlich wahrnehmbare Welt (alle Elemente und die aus ihnen bestehenden Dinge) enthält und umschließt, ohne mit ihnen identisch zu sein. Σπήλαιον ist in den Fragmenten der alten Stoiker nicht belegt, kommt hingegen als Bezeichnung für den Kosmos bei Pherekydes von Syros in der Mitte des 6. Jh. v. Chr. vor (VS I 50,9 Diels, fr. B 6). Logisch gesehen stehen also die beiden Prinzipien auf einer höheren Stufe als die 4 Elemente, weil sie alle Elemente potentiell enthalten.

Im großen letzten Abschnitt des 3. Kapitels (99-157) arbeitet O. zunächst heraus, wie im AJ die stoischen Vorstellungen von *πρόνοια* und *εἰμαρμένη* mit einem neuen Sinn versehen werden. Nach stoischer Lehre ist *πρόνοια* eine die Weltgestaltung lenkende Funktion des λόγος (= θεός bzw. φύσις), die von der *εἰμαρμένη* nicht getrennt werden kann. Diese ist nämlich die Weise, in der die Menschen das Walten der göttlichen *πρόνοια* erfahren. *Pronoia*, das Gesetz von Ursache und Wirkung, durchwaltet die ganze Welt und wirkt zum Besten aller ihrer Teile, insbesondere zugunsten der vernünftigen Wesen, zu denen zunächst die Himmelskörper und schließlich auch die Menschen gehören. Diese haben aber von der *Pronoia* nur dann Nutzen, wenn sie im Einklang mit der φύσις, d.h. dem λόγος (der Weltvernunft) leben (SVF I 179. III 4 und 12). Wer so lebt, wird auch vom Schicksal (*εἰμαρμένη*) unabhängig. Pohlenz (I 100, 104) meint zu Unrecht, *πρόνοια* sei eine anthropozentrische Vorstellung und wie *εἰμαρμένη* dem semitischen Hintergrund der Schulhäupter Zenon von Kition und Chrysipp von Soloi zuzuschreiben. Er vergißt dabei, daß die göttliche *Pronoia* sich primär nicht im menschlichen Bereich, sondern im Bereich der Himmelskörper (Götter) manifestiert.

O.s Darstellung der stoischen Eschatologie (der Ekpyrosis-Lehre) und ihrer Rolle im AJ (140-157) übergehe ich hier und beschränke mich auf ein paar Bemerkungen zur gnostischen Sinngebung der stoischen Vorsehungslehre. O. zeigt zunächst (108-131), wie in den Kurz- ebenso wie in den Langversionen des AJ die *Pronoia* durch Identifizierung mit der Barbelo eine immer größere Bedeutung erlangt. Da JALDABAOth eine Persiflage des stoischen ἡγεμονικόν ist und *Pronoia* nach stoischer Meinung eine der Funktionen des kosmischen ἡγεμονικόν, ergibt sich, daß das AJ schon mit der Wortwahl gegen stoische Vorstellungen polemisiert (133). *Pronoia* tritt im AJ zunächst auf als eine der dem obersten Weltherrscher JALDABAOth unterworfenen Mächte (BG 43,12/II 12,17/IV 19,17; BG 49,16/III 23,1 f./II 15,15 f./IV 24,5). Der auf diese Weise degradierten *Pronoia* wird dann die alles Sichtbare transzendierende *Pronoia* der LICHTWELT, die Barbelo als Paargenossin des obersten, unerkennbaren und unbeschreibli-

chen Gottes (vgl. II 3,19; 4,16; III 5,4,15; 6,14.17.24-25; BG 23,1; 24,2 ff.8.20) gegenübergestellt. Der Gott ist im reinen Licht, in das kein Auge zu blicken vermag (vgl. Platons Sonnengleichnis). Was ein Mensch von diesem unerkennbaren und unbeschreiblichen Gott erkennen kann, wird mit dem Begriff *πρόνοια* umschrieben. Die Lichtkraft der *Pronoia* ist aber nicht "übertranszendental", wie O. fälschlich meint (73, Zeile 21 f.), sondern transzendent, d.h. die sinnlich wahrnehmbare Welt (= den Kosmos) überschreitend und überwindend (vgl. NT Joh 16,33).

Der Kern der Polemik gegen die Stoa besteht nun nicht nur in der Aufspaltung der *Pronoia* in eine immanente und eine transzendente Macht, sondern auch darin, daß diese die Welt transzendierende Erscheinungsform des Vaters (vgl. Platon, *Rep.* 506 e 6. *Tim.* 28 c 3) von ihrer Verbindung mit der *εἰμαρμένη* gelöst wird, denn *εἰμαρμένη* hat im AJ eine bloß innerweltliche (immanente) Aufgabe (vgl. O. 134-139), und zwar eine doppelte.

Nach BG 72,2-12/III 37,6-14//II 28,11-32/IV 43,24-44,20 wird *εἰμαρμένη* von den Archonten des JALDABAOTH geschaffen in der Gestalt von Maßen und Zeiten sowohl für die Götter der Himmel, die Engel und Dämonen als auch für die Menschen (BG 72,2-12/III 37,6-14; O. 134). Maße und Zeiten sind eine Fessel der Bewegung, wie sich an den Bewegungen der Himmelskörper ablesen läßt. Diese Aussage der Kurzversionen verändern die Langversionen, indem sie der soeben beschriebenen *εἰμαρμένη* eine "betäubendere" und "kräftigere" (II 28,17 f.) *εἰμαρμένη* gegenüberstellen. D.h. außer der kosmischen *εἰμαρμένη*, der auch die Menschen als ein Teil der Welt unterworfen sind, gibt es eine spezifisch menschliche *εἰμαρμένη*. Diese wird in II 28,15 als die "letzte" (und schlimmste) Fessel bezeichnet, mit der JALDABAOTH der Welt und den Menschen die Freiheit zu nehmen sucht. Das Ziel dieses Herrn des Bösen ist ja immer, die Menschen durch Verstrickung in das Materielle und sinnlich Wahrnehmbare von der Licht-*Pronoia* abzuziehen, so im folgenden durch *ἡδονή* (II 29,17 ff./BG 74,1 ff.) und *τρυφή*, d.h. Luxus und Üppigkeit, die durch Liebe zu kostbaren Metallen entstehen (II 29,30-30,7/BG 74,15 ff.).

Der Begriff "Letzte" (Fessel) in II 28,15 ist nicht, wie O. meint (137 f.), eine Anspielung auf das Verbum *εἶραι* (aneinanderreihen), mit dem die Stoiker *εἰμαρμένη* etymologisch zu verbinden pflegten, sondern soll die in II 28,21-30 aufgezählten Folgen der Versklavung der Menschen durch diese spezifisch menschliche Fessel von den Formen der kosmischen *εἰμαρμένη* als die letzte und schlimmste Form der Unfreiheit absetzen. Aus dieser "letzten" *εἰμαρμένη* ergibt sich nämlich jede Schlechtigkeit: Gewalt, Blasphemie, Vergessenheit, Unwissenheit, jedes Anstiften von Parteigungen (zu *παρωγῆλῖα* vgl. LSJ s.v. II), schwere Sünden und große Furcht. Diese Fessel ist gegenüber der Fesselung der Gestirne und des Menschen durch Maß und Zeit (der *εἰμαρμένη* als Naturgesetz), d.h. seiner Abhängigkeit von den Gestirnen (von Tag und Nacht usw.), eine "unbeständige" Fessel. Beide Fesselungen sind verschieden voneinander ("gegeneinander verändert", wie Krause II 28,17/IV 43,31 richtig übersetzt). Denn die Fessel der Gestirne zwingt diese in eine geordnete Bahn, die sie nicht verlassen können. Die Fesselung des Menschen durch Schlechtigkeit und Triebhaftigkeit hingegen hält ihn fest in der Finsternis der Hölle dieser Welt (zur

Fesselung vgl. Platon, *Rep.* VII 514 a ff.), sie macht die Unordnung zum "Gesetz" seines Lebens, das nun jede Form von Beständigkeit und Gerechtigkeit einbüßt. Es geht hier also nicht darum, daß bestimmte Gestirnskonstellationen sich als Schicksalsschläge im menschlichen Leben auswirken (so Giversen und Werner, vgl. O. 137), sondern um das Problem der Willensfreiheit (vgl. dazu Pohlenz I 101-106, bes. 105f. und II 60-63 oben). Freiheit des Willens bedeutet für den Stoiker nicht, daß der Mensch tun und lassen kann, was ihm beliebt (*licentia*), denn dann ist er gerade unfrei und gezwungen, weil er nicht handelt, sondern getrieben wird, indem er sich an die ihn versklavenden Triebe bindet und ihnen blindlings folgt, sondern Willensfreiheit bedeutet ein Leben im Einklang mit der Weltvernunft (vgl. die stoischen Definitionen von *εἰμαρμένη* bei Pohlenz I 102 und II 58).

Die Aussage des AJ (II 28,11-32 Parr) über die doppelte *εἰμαρμένη* ist also so zu lesen, daß die Betrachtung der Bahnen der entgötterten und entseelten, rein materiellen Gestirne (vgl. die Kosmologie), d.h. der kosmischen *εἰμαρμένη*, die Menschen nicht vor dem Sturz in den Abgrund aller Schlechtigkeit, d.h. der irdischen *εἰμαρμένη* bewahrt, sondern diese sogar hervorruft, weil das Anschauen des Kosmos zu nichts anderem führt als zur Bindung an die materiell-sinnliche, dämonische Welt (*εἰμαρμένη*), aus welcher Bindung und Fesselung alles Böse entsteht (vgl. Platon, *Rep.* VII, 528 e ff.).

Abschließend können wir sagen: Onuki hat sein Beweisziel erreicht. Polemik gegen stoische Vorstellungen muß im AJ schon deswegen vermutet werden, weil die im 2. Jh. n. Chr. prominenteste Philosophie mit einer rein diesseitigen Weltsicht einen geeigneten Hintergrund abgibt für die nach Transzendierung des sichtbaren Kosmos verlangenden gnostischen Verfasser und Bearbeiter der apokryphen Schrift.

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NUNTII PERSONARUM ET RERUM

Le titre de 'fils de Dieu' dans les évangiles. Sa portée salvifique⁽¹⁾

Au début de l'évangile de Marc, nous lisons cette phrase: « Commencement de l'évangile de Jésus, Christ, fils de Dieu ». Au témoignage des évangiles de Marc et de Matthieu, lorsqu'il voit comment Jésus meurt sur la croix, le centurion romain, un païen, proclame: « Cet homme était vraiment fils de Dieu » (Mc 15,39; Mt 27,54). Selon l'évangile de Jean, lorsqu'il rencontre Jésus pour la première fois, Nathanaël lui dit: « Rabbi, tu es le fils de Dieu, tu es le roi d'Israël » (Jn 1,49). Et plus tard, c'est Marthe qui fera une profession de foi analogue: « Oui Seigneur, je crois que tu es le Christ, le fils de Dieu, qui vient dans le monde » (Jn 11,27). Quelle est la portée exacte de ce titre de 'fils de Dieu' donné au Christ?

La foi chrétienne affirme que Jésus est Dieu. Elle peut s'appuyer sur trois textes du Nouveau Testament qui le disent explicitement. Paul écrivait à son disciple Tite⁽²⁾: « Nous attendons la manifestation glorieuse de notre grand Dieu et sauveur Jésus-Christ » (Tt 2,13). Au début de sa deuxième épître, Pierre parle de la foi 'en notre Dieu et sauveur Jésus-Christ' (2 P 1,1). À la fin de sa première épître, Jean écrivait: « Nous sommes dans le Vérable, et dans son Fils Jésus-Christ; celui-ci est le Dieu véritable et la vie éternelle » (1 Jn 5,20).

Jésus est Dieu. Par ailleurs, au sein de la Trinité, il est le Fils. Nous serions donc tentés de dire que, si le Christ est 'fils de Dieu', c'est en tant que deuxième personne de la Trinité, devenu 'chair' pour vivre au milieu de nous et nous sauver (cf. Jn 1,14). Et de fait, que de gens, même parmi les exégètes chevronnés, pensent que si le Christ peut revendiquer le titre de 'fils de Dieu' c'est parce qu'il est Dieu. Mais telle n'était pas la pensée des évangélistes lorsqu'ils donnaient ce titre à Jésus. Pour eux, héritiers d'une longue tradition qui s'enracine dans l'Ancien Testament, si Jésus peut être dit 'fils de Dieu', ce n'est pas en tant qu'il est 'vrai Dieu', mais en tant qu'il est 'vrai homme'. Ce titre concerne l'humanité du Christ et non pas sa divinité. Il implique en effet une protection efficace, un gage de salut, de la part de Dieu envers celui qu'il a adopté comme fils. Or, si le Christ doit être sauvé, et d'une façon plus spéciale sauvé de la mort, ce n'est évidemment pas en tant qu'il est Dieu, mais en tant qu'il est homme. C'est ce que je voudrais vous montrer aujourd'hui à partir des textes bibliques eux-mêmes.

⁽¹⁾ Continuant sa tradition — publier la leçon publique donnée dans le cadre de la McCarthy Professorship — *Biblica* présente ici la conférence tenue par le Père M.-É. Boismard, O.P., professeur invité pour la chaire McCarthy, le 15 Mars 1991 à l'Institut Biblique de Rome.

⁽²⁾ Dans le cadre de cette conférence, il n'est pas question de discuter l'authenticité paulinienne, pétrinienne ou johannique des textes qui vont être cités ici.

I

Nombreux sont les textes de l'Ancien Testament où nous voyons que Dieu veut sauver son peuple parce qu'il le considère, pris collectivement, comme son fils. Je n'en citerai que quelques-uns, parmi les plus significatifs. Avant l'Exode, Dieu menace Pharaon en ces termes:

«Ainsi parle Yahvé. Mon fils premier-né, c'est Israël. Je t'avais donné cet ordre: 'Laisse partir mon fils pour qu'il me rende un culte'. Puisque tu refuses de le laisser partir, et bien, moi, je vais faire périr ton fils premier-né» (Ex 4,22-23).

Quelques siècles plus tard, le prophète Jérémie annonce d'abord le retour de ses compatriotes qui ont été exilés en Assyrie: «Yahvé a sauvé son peuple, le reste d'Israël». Puis il fait parler Dieu en ces termes:

«Voici que je les ramène du nord et les rassemble des extrémités du monde... Ils étaient partis dans les larmes, dans les consolations je les ramène... Car je suis un père pour Israël et Ephraïm est mon premier-né» (Jr 31,7-9).

Beaucoup plus tard encore, aux approches de l'ère chrétienne, l'auteur du livre de la Sagesse rappelle les prodiges de l'Exode et, faisant écho au premier texte que nous venons de lire, il écrit:

«Ainsi, ceux que des sortilèges avaient rendus longtemps incrédules reconnaissent devant la perte de leurs premiers-nés que ce peuple était fils de Dieu» (Sg 18,13).

Parce que Dieu a formé et créé son peuple, il le considère comme son fils, et donc il l'aime comme un père aime son fils, et donc il va le sauver au moment du péril.

Mais, toujours dans l'Ancien Testament, cette relation de père à fils va se particulariser en référence à certaines personnalités plus marquantes, spécialement le roi que Dieu a institué pour conduire et représenter son peuple. Ainsi, en 2 Sm 7,9-16, Dieu ordonne au prophète Nathan de transmettre au roi David ce message:

«J'ai été avec toi partout où tu allais; j'ai supprimé devant toi tous tes ennemis. Je te donnerai un grand nom, comme le nom des plus grands de la terre... Je te débarrasserai de tous tes ennemis. Yahvé t'annonce qu'il te fera une maison. Et quand tes jours seront accomplis et que tu seras couché avec tes pères, je maintiendrai après toi le lignage issu de tes entrailles et j'affermirai sa royauté. C'est lui qui construira une maison pour mon Nom et j'affermirai pour toujours son trône royal. Je serai pour lui un père et il sera pour moi un fils. S'il commet le mal, je le châtierai avec une verge d'homme et par les coups que donnent les humains. Mais ma faveur ne lui sera pas retirée, comme je l'ai retirée de Saül que j'ai écarté de devant moi. Ta maison et ta royauté subsisteront à jamais devant moi, ton trône sera affermi à jamais».

Cet oracle adressé à David concerne surtout sa descendance: tous ceux qui, issus de lui, seront appelés à régner après lui. Dieu établira avec chacun de ces descendants une alliance spéciale: «Je serai pour lui père et il sera pour moi un fils». C'est un rite d'adoption bien connu dans l'ancien Orient. Le dieu d'un peuple déterminé adoptait comme fils le roi de ce peuple et, par là, il s'engageait à le protéger. C'est ce que veut exprimer cet oracle. Dieu sera 'Avec lui', le descendant de David, comme il a été avec David (v. 9) pour le débarrasser de ses ennemis (v. 11). En conséquence, son trône royal sera affermi pour toujours. Cette promesse de protection, exprimée juste avant la déclaration d'adoption (v. 13), est répétée en conclusion de l'oracle, et sous une double forme pour en accentuer la solennité: «Ta maison et ta royauté subsisteront à jamais devant moi, ton trône sera affermi à jamais» (v. 16).

La relation 'père/fils' qui unit Dieu aux rois issus de David exprime une véritable alliance: le roi devra agir en accord avec la volonté de Dieu; en retour, Dieu s'engage à protéger le roi contre tous ses ennemis de façon à ce que son trône subsiste à jamais. C'étaient les clauses mêmes de l'alliance entre Dieu et son peuple: le peuple s'engageait à observer la Loi divine; en retour, Dieu promettait de protéger son peuple (Ex 19,3-8; 34,10-11). Sans doute, si le roi ne se conduit pas bien, Dieu pourra le châtier comme un père corrige son fils (v. 14b), mais une telle épreuve ne sera que passagère. Parce que Dieu a adopté le roi comme 'fils', il le protégera contre tous ses ennemis.

Durant l'exil à Babylone, que reste-t-il de ces promesses divines? Rien, à ce qu'il semble! L'auteur du psaume 89 s'en plaint amèrement à Dieu en rappelant les promesses faites à David par l'intermédiaire du prophète Nathan:

«J'ai trouvé David mon serviteur, je l'ai oint de mon huile sainte;
pour lui, ma main sera ferme, mon bras aussi le rendra fort...
J'écraserai devant lui ses agresseurs, ses ennemis, je les frapperai»
(vv. 21-24).

Pourquoi Dieu va-t-il protéger David? Parce qu'il l'aime comme un père aime son fils. En introduisant ce thème de l'amour, le psalmiste ne fait qu'explicitier ce qui était implicitement contenu dans l'oracle de Nathan:

«Ma fidélité et mon amour seront avec lui, par mon Nom s'exaltera
sa corne.
J'établirai sa main sur la mer, et sur les fleuves sa droite.
Il m'appellera: 'Toi, mon père, mon Dieu et le rocher de mon salut',
si bien que j'en ferai l'aîné, le Très-Haut sur les rois de la terre.
À jamais je lui garde mon amour, mon alliance lui reste fidèle.
J'ai pour toujours établi sa lignée, et son trône comme les jours des
cieux» (vv. 25-30).

C'est aussi le thème que développe le psaume deuxième. Les nations et les peuples s'agitent, les rois de la terre se révoltent contre Dieu et contre son Christ, contre celui qu'il a marqué de l'onction royale (vv. 1-2). Alors Dieu, dans sa colère, déclare solennellement: «C'est moi qui ai sacré mon roi sur Sion, ma montagne sainte». Puis le roi lui-même prend la parole pour énoncer le décret de Dieu:

« Il m'a dit: Tu es mon fils;
 moi, aujourd'hui, je t'ai engendré.
 Demande, et je te donne les nations pour héritage,
 pour domaine les extrémités de la terre.
 Tu les briseras avec un sceptre de fer,
 comme vases de potier tu les casseras » (vv. 9-11).

En même temps qu'il sacrait son roi à Sion, Dieu le proclamait son fils; il l'a engendré le jour où il l'a établi roi. En conséquence, il va lui donner le pouvoir de briser tous ceux qui se sont révoltés contre lui afin d'établir à jamais son royaume. Le roi eschatologique, notons-le, est à la fois le Christ de Dieu, c'est-à-dire celui qu'il a oint, et le fils de Dieu, celui qu'il protège. Nous retrouverons ces deux titres à propos de plusieurs textes du Nouveau Testament.

Avec le texte de Sg 2,16-20, la perspective s'élargit. Il ne s'agit plus des rapports entre Dieu et le roi qu'il a consacré sur son peuple, mais entre Dieu et le juste qui observe la loi divine. Celui-ci se trouve en butte à la haine de impies, dont il critique le mode de vie qui fait fi de toutes les lois de Dieu. Les impies se moquent alors de lui en ces termes:

« Il nous tient pour chose frelatée et s'écarte de nos chemins comme d'impuretés. Il proclame heureux le sort final des justes et se vante d'avoir Dieu pour père. Voyons si ses dires son vrais, expérimentons ce qu'il en sera de sa fin. Car si le juste est fils de Dieu, Il l'assistera et le délivrera des mains de ses adversaires. Éprouvons-le par l'outrage et la torture afin de connaître sa douleur et de mettre à l'épreuve sa résignation. Condamnons-le à une mort honteuse puisque, d'après ses dires, il sera protégé ».

Plus clairement encore que dans les oracles royaux que nous venons de lire, le titre de 'fils de Dieu' implique une protection divine. Dieu se doit de délivrer le juste des ennemis qui en veulent à sa vie, puisqu'il est son 'père'. Mais les impies ne comprennent pas que, même si le juste est mis à mort, cette mort n'est qu'une apparence car Dieu lui donne de poursuivre sa vie, sa vraie vie, avec son âme:

« Les âmes des justes sont dans la main de Dieu et nul tourment ne les atteindra. Aux yeux des insensés ils ont paru mourir, leur départ a été tenu pour un malheur, mais eux sont en paix. S'ils ont, aux yeux des hommes, subi un châtement, leur espérance était pleine d'immortalité » (Sg 3,1-4).

Tout ceci est écrit dans une perspective plus ou moins platonicienne (cf. Sg 9,15). La mort physique n'est qu'une apparence puisque l'âme humaine, en quittant le corps, ira finalement en Dieu. C'est dire que Dieu, malgré les apparences, va sauver celui que les impies ont mis à mort.

Ainsi, dans l'Ancien Testament, le titre de 'fils de Dieu' n'implique pas une participation de l'homme, qu'il soit roi ou qu'il soit juste, à la divinité. Il signifie seulement que tel homme: le roi, le juste, a été adopté par Dieu qui s'engage à le protéger. C'est un titre qui ne s'applique qu'à l'homme en tant qu'homme, dont la faiblesse requière la protection de Dieu.

II

Ce sont ces textes de l'Ancien Testament qui vont nous aider à comprendre le sens du titre de 'fils de Dieu' donné à Jésus dans les évangiles.

Celui de Marc s'ouvre par ces mots: «Commencement de l'évangile de Jésus, Christ, fils de Dieu». Jésus y reçoit donc deux titres: celui de 'Christ' d'abord, ensuite celui de 'fils de Dieu'. Pour nous, lecteurs du XX^e siècle, le titre de 'Christ' a perdu sa signification primitive. Nous sommes tellement habitués à le voir accolé au nom de Jésus que, souvent, nous ne le sentons plus comme un titre, mais comme une sorte de nom propre. Nous disons 'Jésus Christ' comme nous dirions 'Napoléon Bonaparte'. Même lorsque nous affirmons que Jésus est 'le Christ', ou 'le Messie', les deux titres ont même sens, nous faisons de ces titres l'équivalent de 'sauveur': Jésus serait le Christ, le Messie, en tant qu'il nous a rachetés de nos péchés et sauvés de la mort éternelle.

Dans l'Ancien Testament pourtant, le titre de 'Christ' revêt une signification différente et très précise. Par l'intermédiaire du grec, puis du latin, il traduit un mot hébreu qui signifie 'oint'; il désigne celui qui a reçu une onction de la part de Dieu. Et comme tous les rois étaient intronisés en recevant une onction d'huile sacrée, le titre de 'Oint', de 'Christ', s'appliquait avant tout au roi. Celui-ci était, par excellence, le 'Oint' de Yahvé, le 'Christ' de Dieu.

Lisons alors encore une fois le psaume deuxième. Nous y apprenons que les rois de la terre et les princes se sont révoltés contre Dieu et contre son Oint, c'est-à-dire son Christ. Le psalmiste fait ensuite parler Dieu: «C'est moi qui ai sacré mon roi sur Sion, ma sainte montagne». Il met bien une équivalence entre les titres de 'Christ' et de 'roi'. Puis il donne la parole au Christ-roi: «J'annoncerai le décret de Yahvé; il m'a dit: 'Tu es mon fils, moi, aujourd'hui, je t'ai engendré'». Dieu a adopté comme fils ce Christ-roi qu'il vient d'introniser.

Or selon l'évangile de Marc, Jésus, lors de son baptême et donc au début de sa vie publique, voit l'Esprit descendre sur lui et il entend une voix venue du ciel qui lui dit: «Tu es mon fils, le bien-aimé, en toi je me suis complu» (1,10-11). Tu es mon fils. C'est la déclaration faite par Dieu à son Christ-roi selon le psaume deuxième. Luc l'a bien compris puisque, dans le passage parallèle, il donne le texte sous sa forme complète: «Tu es mon fils, moi, aujourd'hui, je t'ai engendré» (Lc 3,22)⁽²⁾. Et si Dieu déclare à Jésus-homme, en ce jour du baptême, qu'il vient de l'adopter pour fils, c'est parce qu'il vient de lui conférer l'intronisation royale. Jésus peut le comprendre puisqu'il voit l'Esprit descendre sur lui. L'onction royale, en effet, était étroitement liée au don de l'Esprit. Lorsque le prophète Samuel prit la corne d'huile et oignit David comme roi, «l'Esprit de Yahvé s'empara de David à partir de ce jour-là», nous dit le texte sacré (1 Sm 16,13). De même, ce mystérieux personnage dont parle Isaïe en 61,1 déclare: «L'Esprit du Seigneur Yahvé est sur moi, car Yahvé m'a oint».

⁽²⁾ C'est la leçon du texte Occidental. Celle du texte Alexandrin fut harmonisée sur les parallèles de Mt et de Mc.

Ainsi, selon l'évangile de Marc, la scène du baptême de Jésus dans le Jourdain décrit son intronisation royale par Dieu. Il y est oint de l'Esprit saint, ce qui fait de lui le Christ par excellence. Dieu lui déclare alors « Tu es mon fils », comme dans le psaume deuxième. C'est cette scène qu'annonce déjà le début de l'évangile: « Commencement de l'évangile de Jésus, Christ, fils de Dieu ». Jésus n'y est pas dit 'fils de Dieu' en tant qu'il est Dieu, mais en tant qu'il est homme, en tant qu'il est 'le Christ', celui qui a reçu l'onction faisant de lui le roi du royaume nouveau.

Et, comme dans le psaume deuxième, cette filiation adoptive implique une protection spéciale de Dieu sur son Christ-roi. On peut le déduire de la scène de la tentation du Christ par Satan, qui suit immédiatement celle du baptême dans le Jourdain. Marc ne fait que l'insinuer en notant en finale que Jésus « était avec les bêtes sauvages et les anges le servaient » (Mc 1,13). Les bêtes sauvages, entendez les puissances du mal, ne peuvent rien contre lui car il bénéficie du secours des anges. Matthieu et Luc sont beaucoup plus explicites. Après quarante jours de jeûne au désert, Jésus a faim. Le Tentateur s'approche alors de lui et lui dit: « Puisque tu es fils de Dieu, dis que ces pierres deviennent du pain ». Il le transporte ensuite sur le pinacle du Temple et il lui dit: « Puisque tu es fils de Dieu, jette-toi en bas, car il est écrit: 'Il a donné ordre à ses anges de te garder et ils te prendront dans leurs mains de peur que ton pied ne heurte la pierre' ». Puisque Jésus est fils de Dieu, Dieu se doit de lui procurer du pain afin qu'il ne meure pas de faim. Puisque Jésus est fils de Dieu, Dieu va lui envoyer ses anges afin qu'il ne s'écrase pas au pied du pinacle du Temple. Puisque le Christ, le roi du peuple nouveau, est fils de Dieu, Dieu doit lui accorder sa protection et le sauver de la mort.

Reportons-nous maintenant à la scène de Jésus mourant sur la croix. Le centurion romain proclame: « Cet homme était vraiment fils de Dieu » (Mc 15,39; Mt 27,54). Affirme-t-il la divinité de Jésus? Certainement pas. Il veut dire simplement que Jésus est le juste persécuté, le juste qui, mis à mort, est assuré malgré tout de la protection divine. C'est l'annonce, voilée, de la victoire du Christ sur la mort.

Ce sens apparaît clairement dans l'évangile de Matthieu. Nous y lisons que les grands prêtres, les scribes et les Anciens se moquent de Jésus, avant qu'il ne meure, en disant: « Il a sauvé les autres et il ne peut se sauver lui-même. Il est le roi d'Israël, qu'il descende maintenant de la croix et nous croirons en lui ». Puis ils ajoutent, en citant le psaume 22 concernant le juste persécuté: « Il a eu confiance en Dieu, que Dieu le sauve maintenant, s'il le veut ». Puis finalement: « Il a dit: Je suis fils de Dieu » (Mt 27,41-43). Cette dernière phrase fait allusion au texte du livre de la Sagesse que nous avons lu à propos de l'Ancien Testament. Les impies se moquent du juste qui a mis sa confiance en Dieu; ils rappellent ses prétentions: « Il s'est appelé lui-même enfant de Dieu... Voyons si ses paroles sont vraies... Car si le juste est fils de Dieu, Dieu va lui venir en aide et l'arrachera de la main de ses adversaires » (Sg 2,13-18). Il suffit de clouer le juste sur la croix pour prouver que ses prétentions étaient sans fondement.

C'est certainement en opposition à ces sarcasmes que, à la vue du tremblement de terre et des signes cosmiques qui accompagnent la mort de Jésus,

le centurion s'écrie: «Vraiment, celui-ci était fils de Dieu» (Mt 27,54). Ici encore, Luc l'a bien compris et, pour que l'on ne s'y trompe pas, il fait dire au centurion romain, non pas 'cet homme était fils de Dieu', mais 'cet homme était juste'. En effectuant ce changement, il pense certainement au texte du livre de la Sagesse: «Si le juste est fils de Dieu, Dieu va lui venir en aide».

On retrouve dans l'évangile de Jean la même tradition concernant cette identification de Jésus au juste persécuté et sauvé par Dieu, exprimée sous une forme différente. Jésus vient de mourir sur la croix. Selon la coutume, les soldats romains brisent les jambes des deux malfaiteurs qui ont été crucifiés en même temps que lui. Mais, voyant que Jésus était déjà mort, au lieu de lui briser les membres ils lui percent le côté avec une lance. Et l'évangéliste commente la scène en ces termes: «Ceci est arrivé afin que s'accomplît l'Écriture: Aucun de ses os ne sera brisé» (Jn 19,36). L'allusion à Ex 12,10.46 est probable, mais aussi à Ps 34,21:

«Malheur sur malheur pour le juste, mais de tous Yahvé le délivre;
Yahvé garde tous ses os, pas un d'eux ne sera brisé».

Pour Jean comme pour les Synoptiques, Jésus est bien le juste persécuté, ce juste qui, mis à mort par les impies, va être sauvé par Dieu. C'est une annonce voilée de sa résurrection.

Ce texte nous invite à interroger plus à fond l'évangile de Jean. Quel sens donne-t-il au titre de 'fils de Dieu'?

La première fois que ce titre concerne Jésus, c'est dans la confession de foi de Nathanaël: «Rabbi, tu es le fils de Dieu, tu es le roi d'Israël» (Jn 1,49). Il est impossible que Nathanaël ait reconnu la divinité de Jésus dès sa première rencontre avec lui, alors que le Christ n'avait pas encore commencé sa vie publique. Et il serait peu vraisemblable que l'évangéliste lui ait prêté une confession de foi d'une telle portée. Ce titre de 'fils de Dieu' est d'ailleurs mis ici en parallèle avec celui de 'roi d'Israël'. On peut en conclure que, pour l'évangéliste, Jésus est 'fils de Dieu' en tant que 'roi d'Israël', dans la perspective ouverte par l'oracle de Nathan et reprise dans le psaume deuxième. Il s'agit d'une filiation adoptive qui concerne l'humanité de Jésus et non sa divinité.

Il existe il est vrai, dans l'évangile de Jean, deux textes qui donnent une portée transcendante au titre de 'fils de Dieu' attribué à Jésus. Il s'agit de Jn 19,7 et 10,33. Dans les deux passages, ce sont les Juifs qui accusent Jésus de se faire l'égal de Dieu. En 19,7, ils déclarent à Pilate: «Nous avons une loi, et selon cette loi il doit mourir car il s'est fait fils de Dieu». A leurs yeux donc, le titre de 'fils de Dieu' aurait une valeur transcendante et, puisque Jésus se l'est attribué, il doit être mis à mort comme blasphémateur. L'autre texte est plus intéressant car il va nous donner la pensée de l'évangéliste sur la portée réelle du titre. Les Juifs veulent lapider Jésus parce qu'il a blasphémé: il s'est fait Dieu alors qu'il n'est qu'un homme (Jn 10,33). Par 'il s'est fait Dieu', il faut comprendre 'il s'est dit fils de Dieu', comme le fait Jésus dans la réponse qu'il leur donne (10,36). Mais voyons de plus près cette réponse:

«N'est-il pas écrit dans votre Loi: 'J'ai dit: Vous êtes des dieux'? Si la Loi appelle 'dieux' ceux à qui la parole de Dieu fut adressée — et l'Écriture ne peut être abolie — celui que le Père a sanctifié et envoyé dans le monde vous lui dites: 'Tu blasphèmes' parce que j'ai dit 'Je suis fils de Dieu' ».

Le raisonnement de Jésus est simple. Il constate d'abord que l'Écriture appelle 'dieux' les hommes à qui fut adressée la parole de Dieu. Cette Écriture n'est autre que Ps 82,6: «J'ai dit: Vous êtes des dieux, et tous des fils du Très-Haut». Les gens dont parle le psaume sont en fait les magistrats chargés de rendre la justice en Israël. Ainsi, l'Écriture elle-même, dont on ne peut récuser le témoignage, donnait à de simples hommes le titre de 'fils de Dieu', ou même de 'dieux'. Ce titre n'impliquait donc pas une prétention à se faire l'égal de Dieu. Pourquoi alors les Juifs accusent-ils Jésus d'avoir blasphémé parce qu'il s'est dit 'fils de Dieu'? Ils ont tort de donner à ce titre une valeur transcendante qu'il n'a jamais eue.

En revanche, comme dans les Synoptiques, ce titre implique de la part de Dieu une protection efficace envers celui qu'il a adopté pour fils. Nous allons le comprendre en relisant le récit de l'apparition du Christ ressuscité à Marie Madeleine. Une fois qu'il s'est fait reconnaître par elle, Jésus lui donne ce message:

«Va vers les frères et dis-leur: 'Je monte vers mon Père et votre Père, vers mon Dieu et votre Dieu' » (Jn 20,17).

Nous avons dans cette parole de Jésus un double parallélisme: entre les titres de 'Père' et de 'Dieu' d'une part, entre Jésus et les disciples d'autre part.

Le parallélisme entre les titres de 'Père' et de 'Dieu' s'explique fort bien dans la perspective des textes de l'Ancien Testament que nous avons lus ensemble. Nous avons vu que la paternité de Dieu envers le roi de son peuple ou envers le juste, fidèle à la Loi divine, impliquait une protection efficace de la part de Dieu. Que ce soit bien le cas ici, nous en trouvons une confirmation dans le titre parallèle de 'mon Dieu'. Des études récentes ont montré que, toujours dans l'Ancien Testament, la formule 'Dieu de' équivalait à 'protecteur de' ⁽⁴⁾. Le Dieu d'Abraham, d'Isaac, de Jacob, de tout Israël, c'est celui qui va protéger et sauver Abraham, Isaac, Jacob et tout Israël. Ainsi, lorsque Jésus annonce qu'il va monter vers son Père et vers son Dieu, il déclare qu'il va rejoindre celui qui vient de manifester envers lui sa protection souveraine en le ressuscitant des morts. C'est la réponse aux sarcasmes des impies tels qu'ils sont rapportés en Sg 2,18: «Si le juste est fils de Dieu, Dieu l'assistera et l'arrachera des mains de ses adversaires».

Mais le thème de la royauté du Christ est également présent dans le texte johannique. En effet, paraphrasant l'oracle du prophète Nathan au roi David, comme je l'ai dit tout à l'heure, l'auteur du psaume 89 rappelle en ces termes les promesses de Dieu à l'égard du roi davidique: «Il m'appellera 'Toi, mon Père, mon Dieu et le rocher de mon salut' » (vv.27-28). Com-

⁽⁴⁾ Cf. F. DREYFUS, 'L'argument scripturaire de Jésus en faveur de la résurrection des morts', *RB* 66 (1959) 213-224.

ment douter que Jésus ne fasse allusion à ce texte lorsqu'il déclare « Je monte vers mon Père... vers mon Dieu » au moment même où Dieu vient de le sauver de la mort? Cette discrète allusion à la royauté du Christ, royauté qui est solidement assurée malgré les apparences, rejoint par mode d'inclusion la confession de foi de Nathanaël au début de l'évangile: « Rabbi, tu es le fils de Dieu, tu es le roi d'Israël » (Jn 1,49).

Mais la parole de Jésus rapportée en Jn 20,17 contient aussi un parallélisme entre le Christ et ses disciples: « Je monte vers mon Père et votre Père, vers mon Dieu et votre Dieu ». L'intention de cette parole est évidente. En quittant ses disciples, Jésus ressuscité veut leur laisser une certitude. Dieu est le Père et le Dieu, non seulement du Maître, mais aussi des disciples. Et comme il a donné au Maître de vaincre la mort, ainsi il donnera aux disciples de vaincre la mort à leur tour.

Parce que nous avons accueilli le Verbe, la Parole, nous avons reçu pouvoir de devenir 'enfants de Dieu' (Jn 1,12). Écoutons alors ce qu'écrivait Jean, le disciple par excellence:

« Voyez quel amour le Père nous a donné, que nous soyons appelés 'enfants de Dieu', et nous le sommes... Bien-aimés, dès maintenant nous sommes 'enfants de Dieu'. Mais ce que nous serons n'a pas encore été manifesté. Nous savons que, lorsque ce sera manifesté, nous Lui serons semblables parce que nous le verrons tel qu'il est » (1 Jn 3,1-2).

Puissent ces paroles nous être rappelées lorsque, pour nous aussi, l'Heure sera venue.

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